

VOLUME V, NUMBER 3, SUMMER 2005

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REVIEW OF BOOKS

A Journal of Political Thought and Statesmanship

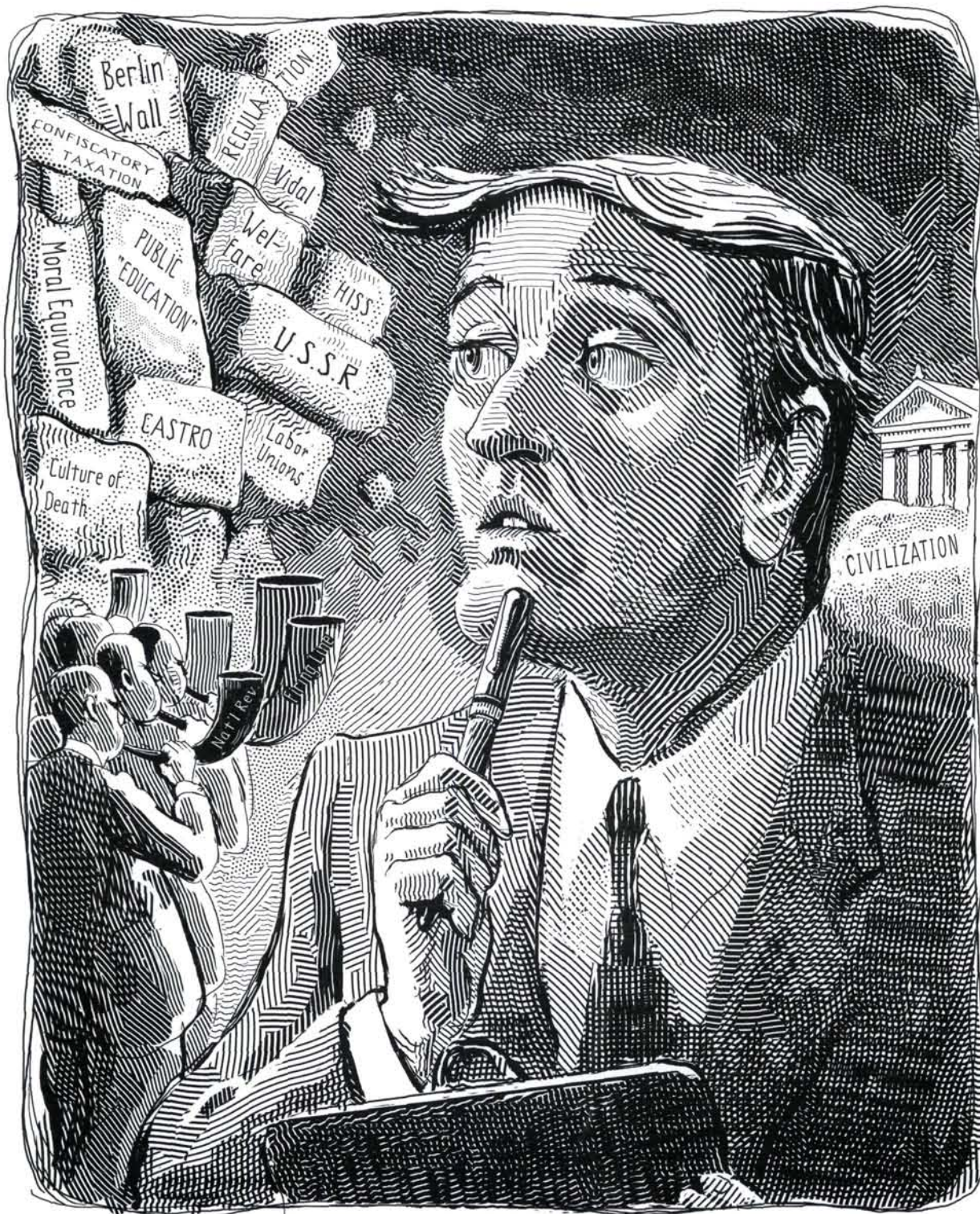
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AND THE WALLS CAME TUMBLING DOWN

Wm. F. Buckley, Jr., and the American Conservative Movement

by Michael M. Uhlmann

Plus reviews by

Andrew E. Busch, Kenneth Minogue, and William A. Rusher



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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

BOOKLESS IN AMERICA

by Charles R. Kesler

HALF A CENTURY AGO, IN LIBERALISM'S HEYDAY, AMERICAN conservatism seemed a contradiction in terms. Men of genuine and liberal learning (was there any other kind?) assured one another that the United States is, was, and ever would be a liberal society. They defined liberalism in an easy-going, open-ended way, connecting the New Deal to the American Revolution by a more-or-less straight line, defined less by philosophy than by temperament: the readiness to change, to experiment, to reinvent—both the government and the self.

In various ways, Louis Hartz, Lionel Trilling, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and others drove this lesson home. For better or worse (most thought for the better), America was the land of liberalism. Conservatism was at best liberalism's shadow ("the thankless persuasion," Clinton Rossiter called it) and at worst a European affectation, at once aristocratic and ridiculous. American conservatism was inarticulate—"bookless," John Kenneth Galbraith once remarked acidulously—because it had nothing to say either about or to America.

With his usual acuity, Galbraith's pronouncement came in the midst of the century's greatest outpouring of conservative books. The 1950s and 1960s saw the publication of classic works by (to name a few) Friedrich Hayek, Milton Friedman, Russell Kirk, Richard Weaver, Robert Nisbet, Eric Voegelin, Leo Strauss, Harry V. Jaffa, Edward C. Banfield, Whittaker Chambers, and William F. Buckley, Jr. Subsequent decades added luster, with James Buchanan, Thomas Sowell, Charles Murray, James Q. Wilson, Allan Bloom, Walter Berns, Irving Kristol, Norman Podhoretz, and others joining the fray.

So, who's bookless now? The publisher of the *New Republic*, no less, admitted recently: "It is liberalism that is now bookless and dying."

"Who is a truly influential liberal mind in our culture?" Martin Peretz asked. "Whose ideas challenge and whose ideals inspire?... There's no one, really. What's left is the laundry list: the catalogue of programs... that Republicans aren't funding, and the blogs, with their daily panic dose about how the Bush administration is ruining the country."

In fact, the exhaustion of liberal ideas started long ago: modern liberalism peaked intellectually in the first half of the last century. By the century's end, so many progressive ideas had been written into law, with such mixed results, that liberals remain bewildered and even to a degree disillusioned by their own successes, not to mention their multi-

plying electoral defeats. Their glory days seem behind them. If "the era of big government is over," after all, where do liberals go from here?

Think twice before gloating, however. After victory in the Cold War and the death of many of conservatism's founding fathers (especially Ronald Reagan), one senses on the Right not only a generational shift but also a growing distraction or inattentiveness, as though the campfires are burning down.

THE TWO DEVELOPMENTS ARE RELATED, IN PART. GEORGE W. Bush's administration is by some measures as conservative as Ronald Reagan's, but its spirit is quite different. Reagan and his administration were shaped by the clash between regnant liberalism and the plucky conservative opposition. Bush's administration inherited Reagan's triumph and liberalism's senescence. As a result, Bush can assume, politically speaking, much that Reagan had to argue; and the president can take for granted, alas, much that Reagan always championed, like the case for limited government.

This decline is visible in conservatism at large, too. It is one thing (a blessing, I can tell you) to grow up reading and watching Bill Buckley; another to grow up reading and watching Bill O'Reilly.

Bush's lapses are not comprehensive, of course. He cut taxes. He has ordered heroic actions that Reagan never had to. And his reliance on natural rights brings Bush closer at least to the American Founding than many old-school conservatives ever got, despite their constant appeals to it.

Nonetheless, the danger of taking our precepts for granted—for forgetting the thinkers and arguments that made possible the epic confrontation with liberalism—grows greater as American conservatism moves farther away from its own founding age. We need to recur to first principles if we are not to lose sight of our purposes.

But then one of the spiritual advantages of conservatism is the confidence that all is never completely lost...or won. There is no such thing as saving civilization, once and for all. It is a never-ending challenge. Though the finest books may fade and be forgotten, truth endures, awaiting rediscovery. Most liberals, by contrast, believe fervently in mankind's evolution, in every sense of the term. Once shake their faith that history is necessarily on their side, and they are left unmanned—and bookless.

Claremont Review of Books, Volume V, Number 3, Summer 2005. (Printed in the United States on June 21, 2005.)

Published quarterly by the Claremont Institute for the Study of Statesmanship and Political Philosophy, 937 West Foothill Blvd., Suite E, Claremont, CA 91711. Telephone: (909) 621-6825. Fax: (909) 626-8724. Periodicals postage pending at Claremont, CA, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster send address changes to Claremont Review of Books Address Change, 937 West Foothill Blvd., Suite E, Claremont, CA 91711.

Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope; or may be sent via email to: crbedit@claremont.org.

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Publisher (1999-2001): Thomas B. Silver

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C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

SPREADING DEMOCRACY

Gerard Alexander applauds Natan Sharansky's epic journey to freedom, but questions the methodology of the author's *The Case for Democracy* ("Freedom Fighter," Spring 2005). Alexander acknowledges the nobility of Sharansky's words, but argues that his evidence does not make the case. We are told that the book's two examples—the Soviet Union and Israel—are not an adequate basis upon which to generalize. But Alexander's objection is misguided because Sharansky's work is not academic research. His assessment is original analysis based upon personal observations of captive people. Moreover, Alexander's criticism does not disprove Sharansky's case. In addition to Sharansky's two examples we can point to other aggressive states that brought violence to the international system in the 20th century, and subsequently became peaceful following the institution of democracy—states such as Turkey, Japan, and Germany.

Alexander faults Sharansky's critique of academics, "freedom's skeptics," who question democracy's universal application. But Sharansky's bold vision resembles our Founding Fathers' generalization on the human condition: "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal..."

When horrible crimes and grave injustices have been committed, and public confidence is shaken, it may be necessary for leaders to act without the benefit of lengthy academic study. Instead of discrediting *The Case for Democracy*, as Alexander has tried to do, Americans should embrace Sharansky's tour de force. His understanding of life without freedom and his moral clarity offer unique insights to all who wage the war against terrorism.

Andrew P. O'Meara, Jr.
Colonel, United States Army, Retired
Pawleys Island, SC

US AND THEM

In his reply to Michael Ignatieff's letter ("Sovereignty and Torture," Spring 2005), Jeremy Rabkin asks, rhetorically we may assume, "Why shouldn't we interpret our international obligations in ways that impose the least burden on our efforts to defend our-

selves"? Imagine asking this about how police ought to deal with criminal suspects—why bother about due process in defending us from suspected criminals, something that surely imposes burdens on the police, and us as well? Prof. Rabkin seems to think that unless there is a *quid pro quo*, such suspects deserve no consideration for their rights. But when one has rights, unalienable ones especially, one keeps them even if one has violated those of another. People do not cease to be human beings even if they are criminal or terrorist suspects.

Tibor R. Machan
Chapman University

Jeremy Rabkin replies:

Tibor Machan suggests that American military tactics in foreign wars should be constrained, in some way, by the rights accorded to accused individuals in ordinary law enforcement in our own country. If this were true, then all past wars fought by the United States have been fought with shocking disregard for legality. The U.S. military has always treated enemy combatants differently from crime suspects at home. Perhaps on this point, Prof. Machan's complaint should be directed to the framers of our Constitution who authorized Congress to enact "rules for the...regulation of the land and naval forces." From the first Congress onward, that provision has always been understood to mean different "rules" for the military from those laid down in the Bill of Rights.

Next, Machan equates American obligations under international agreements with constitutional duties at home. In most circumstances, American treaty obligations are precisely dependent on other parties adhering to a *quid pro quo*. That is why, for example, the Geneva Conventions stipulate that they apply only between "contracting parties" and those who "comply with the standards" set down in them. Here again, Machan's quarrel is with the American Founders. In *The Federalist*, James Madison noted that the Articles of Confederation, as a treaty among states, could be rightfully discounted by any state, whenever another state committed a "breach" of its terms, given the "principle of reciprocity" governing "the subject of treaties." Madison's precise point was that the Constitution com-

mands authority that a treaty does not.

Finally, Machan wants to entangle "natural rights" with treaty obligations and constitutional duties. I acknowledge that moral considerations may place limits on our choice of military tactics. I said that in so many words in my review of Ignatieff's book. And yet, some very formidable "natural rights" theorists, such as John Locke and Hugo Grotius, thought the doctrine compatible with such brutal extremes as perpetual enslavement of defeated enemies.

If Machan wants to defend constitutional rights at home—and I certainly join him in that aim—he should steer as far as he can from equating our Bill of Rights with the absurd mish-mash of empty platitudes offered up in international human rights conventions. These conventions were not the work of diplomats devoted to American ideals of liberty. It is because humanity at large is not governed by a common set of laws that we need to have our own military in the first place and need to leave it free to adapt to the tactics deployed by our enemies.

ENDING SLAVERY

In the course of reviewing two books on Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War, Mackubin Owens asks rhetorically, "Who knows when slavery would have ended?" ("Subjugation and Extermination," Winter 2004). But history tells us that the largest slave labor-based economy in the Western Hemisphere (indeed in the world) ended slavery in 1888, not long after the U.S. Civil War, because it was no longer profitable. It would have become unacceptably unprofitable even sooner in the more technically advanced United States.

The "peculiar institution" was already becoming measurably less profitable in the U.S. by 1860, as data in a multitude of studies on the subject illustrate, to the point where only westward expansion and enlarged slave-breeding offered hope for profitability.

Mr. Lincoln could have bought out the slaveholders for \$3 billion (3 million slaves at \$1,000/head) but instead chose to start a war which cost \$12 billion and 600,000 lives and which left a quarter of the country devastated.

Martin Harris
Brandon, VT

Mackubin Thomas Owens replies:

Since the Constitution left the issue of slavery to the states, Lincoln believed from the outset of his presidency that if he could prevail upon state legislatures to accept gradual, compensated emancipation while preventing the expansion of slavery into the federal territories, he could shrink slavery by making it uneconomical. This would place it back on the eventual road to extinction that he believed the founders had envisioned.

Of course, seven Southern states seceded before his inauguration, and four more followed after the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter. When he proposed his plan for gradual, compensated emancipation to slaveholders in the loyal Border States, they rebuffed him.

I'm not sure what more Lincoln could have done to avoid war other than give in on the issue which had led to the 1860 Republican electoral victory. During his First Inaugural, Lincoln reiterated his oft-stated position that he did not have any intention of interfering with slavery where it legally existed, and did not possess any lawful right to do so. But he adamantly refused any compromise on slavery's expansion.

Does Mr. Harris believe that the South

should have been permitted to "go in peace"? Secession would not have led to peace but to endless war on the North American continent—and perhaps even in South America. More importantly for Mr. Harris's argument, it would have given slavery a new lease on life.

The Confederacy envisioned an empire stretching north to the Mason-Dixon Line and the Ohio River and west to the Colorado. This empire would have contained all 15 slave states, including those that had not seceded, and two existing U.S. territories, New Mexico and the Indian Territory south of Kansas.

In keeping with this grand vision, the Confederacy admitted Missouri and Kentucky to statehood, despite the lack of a secessionist majority in either state. The Confederate congress initiated treaties with the Indian tribes and dispatched an expedition to conquer the New Mexico Territory for the Confederacy. In January 1862, it organized a separate Arizona Territory. The "slaveholding empire" envisioned by the Confederacy would likely have turned its attention south to Cuba, Mexico, and Central America, the frequent targets of antebellum pro-slavery "filibusters."

Had reformers within the Confederacy decided at some point in the future that slavery

ought to be abolished, they would have found that the Confederate constitution blocked their way. For unlike the U.S. Constitution, which left the question of slavery to the states, making decentralized abolition possible, the Confederate constitution prohibited the Confederate congress from passing any law "impairing the right of property in negro slaves" and prohibited the states from likewise interfering with the institution of slavery.

Mr. Harris acknowledges that "only westward expansion and enlarged slave-breeding offered hope for [slavery's] profitability." Had a "slaveholding empire" expanded to the west and south, slavery might still be with us today.

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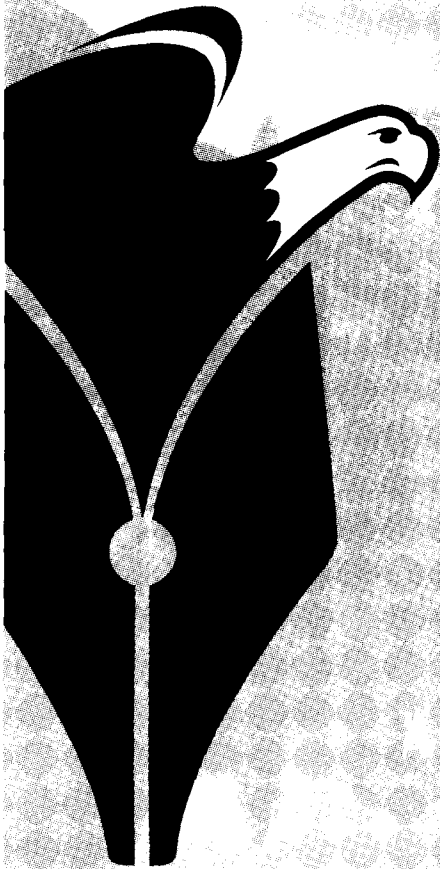
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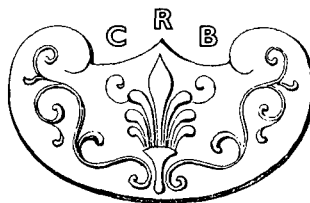


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PROFILES IN DIVERSITY

Essay by Victor Davis Hanson

WHETHER OR NOT YOU AGREED with them, university presidents used to be dignified figures on the American scene. They often were distinguished scholars, capable of bringing their own brand of independent thinking to bear on the operation and reform of their institutions. Above all, they took seriously the university's mission to seek and transmit the Truth, and thereby to strengthen the free society that made such inquiry possible.

But it has been a long time since Woodrow Wilson (at Princeton), Robert Hutchens (at Chicago), or James Bryant Conant (at Harvard) set the tone for American campuses. Over the past year, four university presidents have been in the news—from Harvard; the University of California, Santa Cruz; the University of Colorado; and the University of California, Berkeley. In each case, the curtains have briefly parted, allowing the public to glimpse the campus wizards working the levers behind the scenes, and confirming that something has gone terribly wrong at our best public and private universities.

Hypocrisy, faddishness, arrogance, and intellectual cowardice are among the ailments of the American university today, and it is hard to say whether even a great president could save higher education from its now institutionalized vices. Amid the variety of scandals afflicting the campuses, the one constant is how the rhetoric of "diversity" trumps almost all other considerations—and how race and gender can be manipulated by either the college president or the faculty in ways that

have nothing to do with educating America's youth, but everything to do with personal aggrandizement in an increasingly archaic and unexamined enclave.

Unfree Speech

AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY, EMBATTLED President Lawrence Summers challenged notions of "diversity" and paid a steep price. He suggested—off the record, at a conference of the National Bureau of Economic Research—that factors other than institutional prejudice and cultural pressure might help explain the relative dearth of women faculty in the hard sciences at Harvard and other elite universities. If the intent of that mildly provocative, off-the-cuff exegesis was to jumpstart debate among serious thinkers, it proved a big mistake. Within seconds, one tough-minded feminist was reduced to bouts of nausea and swooning, and within hours many were calling for Summers to apologize, if not resign.

As the country soon learned, Summers had touched the live wire of the contemporary campus by hinting that inequality of result might be due to something other than invidious and institutional discrimination. Summers fell back limp from that high-voltage jolt; only massive and repeated doses of self-abasement could resuscitate him. Accordingly, he quickly renounced and denounced his own musings, promising task forces, "independent listeners," investigations, committees, and ample largesse (including \$50 million from Harvard's own bulging coffers) to be distributed to the pur-

ported victims of his insensitivity—who are in fact some of the most educated, privileged, and upscale women on the planet.

But to save Summers's job it will probably cost much more than his pledge of \$5 million a year for a decade. His special task force already has urged the appointment of a senior "vice provost for diversity and faculty development," along with improved recruitment and the "mentoring" of junior faculty members. According to a communiqué from his office, the members of his task force "propose a series of reforms and enhancements to the way women pursuing science and engineering are treated at every point along the 'pipeline,' from undergraduates, to graduate students, to post-doctoral fellows, to the faculty ranks." And lest we think \$50 million is too much, Summers's statement also added that it is merely a down payment: "There is no doubt that these initiatives will require significant additional expenditures. But we want to make clear at the outset that this is a serious effort calling for a serious commitment of resources."

Somehow the former Secretary of the Treasury, who once helped manage the Byzantine world of global commerce, failed to realize that the entire campus industry of mandated retroactive compensation—targeted fellowships, release time (i.e., excusing teachers from teaching), ideological curricula, favorable hiring and promotion considerations, tenure decisions based on criteria other than merit, and other forms of recompense that Summers in fact scrambled to grant—would be imperiled by a few politically incorrect syllables. Perhaps President Summers naively thought that Harvard was about

free speech and unfettered discourse—its motto, after all, is *Veritas*, “Truth.” In any event, he quickly recovered, winning back through penance, self-censorship, and spoils a job that he had almost forfeited in a passing moment of intellectual curiosity.

Double Standards

ONE OF PRESIDENT SUMMERS’S CHIEF critics, Dr. Denise Denton, the newly-appointed Chancellor of the University of California, Santa Cruz, heralded Summers’s public humiliation as a “teachable moment.” As one president to another, she objected: “Here was this economist lecturing pompously [to] this room full of the country’s most accomplished scholars on women’s issues in science and engineering, and he kept saying things we had refuted in the first half of the day.”

But Chancellor Denton has her own shortcomings. They do not revolve around mere impromptu remarks, nor have they been trailed by public apologies and task forces. Yet in its own way her controversy goes to the heart of the same contemporary race-and-gender credo that governs the university, enjoying exemption from normal scrutiny and simple logic.

Before her arrival, Chancellor Denton arranged the creation of a special billet—ad hoc, unannounced, and closed to all applicants but one: Chancellor Denton’s live-in girlfriend of seven years, Gretchen Kalonji. Most recognize this as the sort of personal accommodation—old-boy networking, really—that Chancellor Denton presumably wishes to replace with affirmative action, thus ending backroom deals and crass nepotism.

But if race and gender—what we now refer to as “diversity”—are to be taken seriously, one wonders whether there was not a qualified African-American or Latina woman who could at least have been interviewed for the lucrative U.C. position. After all, Chancellor Denton herself praised U.C. Santa Cruz for its “celebration of diversity.” And earlier, she insisted that “it is really shocking to hear the president of Harvard make statements like that,” i.e., statements that ever-so-gently questioned the diversity shibboleth. Consider the reaction had President Summers arrived at a public, tax-supported university and arranged for his live-in girlfriend to have life-long employment in a specially-created job, complete with a subsidized move into a rent-free home.

And a six-figure salary: Gretchen Kalonji’s unusual position pays \$192,000 a year. Now, it happens that Chancellor Denton—whose salary is \$275,000—was granted \$68,750 to subsidize the move into the rent-free University President’s House. But Kalonji, too, received a grant

for expenses incurred during her “transition” to the Santa Cruz campus—\$50,000, in fact.

The decision to pay \$120,000 in public money for moving expenses to a couple with a combined salary of \$467,000 can be defended, perhaps, but one group was certainly outraged: the university’s maintenance staff, secretaries, and blue-collar workers. U.C. Santa Cruz’s workers had not received a raise in three years. Yet in response to questions about her controversial partner accommodation—and the message that it sent to less-fortunate others on the campus—Chancellor Denton did not sound like a woman of the Left. “It’s a typical practice,” she explained in an interview with the local *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, “in the corporate world or academia.” As if turning for support to the suspect world of capitalism was not enough, Chancellor Denton also sought the sanctuary of victimhood, of someone at the mercy of red-state yahoos: “We got caught in the middle of national forces, gay marriage, red-state/blue-state issues and a state ruling. It’s a hot item right now, and it heightened the tension. I was kind of surprised at the *San Francisco Chronicle* coverage saying “lesbian lover.” It seemed more like a tabloid headline.”

It proved impossible for a white male like Larry Summers to find shelter from the storm. But a gay woman had simply to ignore questions of social equity by playing the diversity-card herself—in addition to claiming corporate precedents for her own unusual perks. Aware of the growing controversy over the hire, Chancellor Denton returned to the mantra of diversity to explain her own decision to come to Santa Cruz. “The focus on diversity and social justice is important to me,” she emphasized to the *Sentinel*, recalling how she had spoken out against Summers’s remarks: “We need to address the issue of equity and access. It requires a cultural change and university presidents have to provide leadership.”

Gretchen Kalonji certainly had “access,” and Denton certainly provided “leadership” in assuring “equity” to her partner. Perhaps Kalonji’s hiring even resulted in the desired “cultural change.” But it is fortunate for Chancellor Denton that she does not share the politics of, say, Congressman Tom DeLay, who endured far more obloquy for hiring his wife, for far less money, to work on his congressional campaigns.

Crying McCarthyism

NOW WE COME TO THE THIRD CASE: University of Colorado President Elizabeth Hoffman. She recently resigned, ostensibly following athletic scandals, but more likely as a result of the uproar over Ward Churchill. We remember him now as the strange professor who compared the

3,000 murdered in the Twin Towers and Pentagon to “Little Eichmanns,” supposed cogs in the military-industrial wheel who deserved their fate. The public grudgingly accepted that Churchill’s wartime praise for the 9/11 murderers (“combat teams” rightfully avenging America’s murder of “500,000 Iraqi children”) is protected free speech. But it could not quite fathom why Churchill was not summarily dismissed for other sins.

And they were legion. He had fabricated a Native American heritage, lying on affidavits about his ethnic identity to help make up for his lack of credentials and suspect work. Churchill had been promoted to full professor at a major research university without the requisite Ph.D. degree, enjoying apparent ethnic immunity from a series of old allegations involving theft of intellectual property, plagiarism, and academic misrepresentation. Most people outside the university were amazed not so much that Churchill was not immediately terminated as that he had been hired and promoted in the first place. To them he seemed like a swerving drunk driver, who when pulled over is found to have a long rap sheet. Yet how many others like the \$112,000-a-year, department-chairing Churchill scramble about in the unexamined sanctuaries of the modern university, parlaying real or imagined victim status into lucrative careers?

President Hoffman did her best to deflect attention from the Churchill mess by a now-familiar victimization gambit. The scandal was not Churchill and his remarks but the reaction to them: academic freedom was under assault from—what else?—“a New McCarthyism.” At the barricades, as it were, she boasted to her faculty senate that “I was a tiger about speech. There was no way I was going to touch speech.” She went on, “We are in dangerous times. I’m very concerned.... It’s looking a lot like [former C.U. President] George Norlin being asked to fire all the Catholics and Jews or the McCarthy era. We need to make sure we don’t let ourselves go down that path, no matter how much shouting there is from the outside. There are forces that would push us down that path if we let them.”

Meanwhile, the media-savvy Churchill—replete with long gray locks, beaded head-band, shades, buckskin, and the Native American name Keezjunnahbeh (which means “kind-hearted man”; Ward Churchill is his “colonial” name)—was determined to capitalize on his windfall fame. Indeed, he was undoubtedly grateful, after years of toiling in painful obscurity, that the media had at long last noticed his outrageous behavior. He grasped that he was already eligible for lucrative retirement benefits,

which now could be enhanced by a generous golden parachute from the University of Colorado, eager to avoid millions of dollars in lawsuits and more bad press.

So Churchill keeps on touring and speaking to audiences about American culpability for September 11, praising those who murder Americans and vowing hostility to the very idea of America. President Hoffman announced her resignation in March, and Churchill's lawyer now negotiates the promised buy-out with her successor.

Quota King

FINALLY, THERE IS ROBERT J. BIRGENEAU, the new Chancellor of the University of California, Berkeley. Upon arriving in the Bay Area, he quickly vowed to solve the problems he had found. Surprisingly, these had nothing to do with a decline in academic standards, deterioration in the quality of Berkeley's key departments, or a state funding crisis. Instead, the Chancellor complained that Berkeley has fewer Native American, Hispanic, and African-American students enrolled than it should—the campus was only 3% black, 9.5% Hispanic, and 0.4% Native American, in contrast with about 45% Asian-American and about 33% white. (The California population comprises 6.5% blacks, 33% Hispanics, 0.92% Native Americans, 11% Asian-Americans, and 45% whites.) Birgeneau is obsessed with racial diversity, as determined by percentages and quotas. But as we shall see, the numbers, under closer examination, may make him regret pandering to the diversity industry.

Chancellor Birgeneau blames the apparent statistical injustices on Proposition 209, the 1996 California ballot initiative that forbade the use of racial criteria in state hiring; it passed with the support of 55% of the electorate. In his view, however, democracy ought to defer to elite opinion; thus, to this Canadian academic the state's voters were obviously misguided: "I personally don't believe that most of the people who voted for [Prop.] 209 intended this consequence."

One can learn a lot about the pathologies of the contemporary university from what its presidents say—and don't say. A close look at the data suggests a different picture from the one implied by Birgeneau's gratuitous lamentations about the lack of diversity. Whites, for instance, are under-enrolled at Berkeley: they amount to around 35% of undergraduates versus 45% of the state's population. Given this fact, why doesn't the Chancellor complain about the shortage of whites on campus?

He is oddly quiet, too, about the more

explosive issue of the Asian-American presence. This group constitutes almost half the Berkeley student population, even though Asians probably make up only about 11% of California residents and 4% of the general U.S. population. Why doesn't Birgeneau admit that achieving his racial utopia would require deliberately *reducing* the enrollment of Asian-American students—presumably by discounting meritocratic criteria and test scores and instead emphasizing "community service" or other nebulous standards designed to circumvent Prop. 209? But because the new Chancellor is obviously a sensitive sort, he cannot say what he apparently means: something like, "We have too many Asians, almost five times too many, and I am here to impose a quota on them and other suspect races." Instead, he worries about "underrepresentation" of some, while denying the logical corollary of "overrepresentation" of others. The same logic applies to gender, by the way. U.C. campuses enroll thousands more women than men, very much out of proportion to the general population, and yet Birgeneau does not decry the "overabundance" of women.

Remember, too, that Asians have suffered a particularly long history of discrimination in California. Despite everything from immigration quotas to forced internment during World War II, they have the highest high-school graduation rates in the state, while blacks and Hispanics suffer the lowest. What, then, could we learn from the Asian-American experience that seems to render past hurdles to achievement irrelevant to present academic performance? Don't expect Chancellor Birgeneau to take the lead in asking this question.

There is enormous intellectual arrogance on the campus these days, manifested in condescension towards the average taxpaying citizen. We sense such haughtiness when for the last 30 years the rate of tuition increases has exceeded inflation, without either much worry or accountability from university administrators. They assume that the public has no business questioning whether tenure, release time, research perks, top-heavy administration, and therapeutic programs constitute a wise use of education funds.

Instead, Birgeneau declares that he intends to reopen the question of Prop. 209, to begin a scholarly and, ultimately, popular campaign for its repeal or effective repeal. He refuses to concede the wisdom, much less the justice, of the voters' deliberate endorsement of it. This unfortunate outcome, he argues, could have been reversed by a change of just five percentage points—what he calls a "quite small percentage of the population." But he is blind to

the fact that Prop. 209, far from being an aberration or exception, was part of the deliberate, ongoing public disapproval of tribal and ethnic separatism and of deviations from traditional respect for legality, merit selection, and national unity—as manifested, for instance, in opposition to bilingualism in schools and to illegal immigration.

Nor does the Chancellor entertain the possibility that racial rubrics themselves are increasingly irrelevant, especially in California, where exogamy (marriage proper and cohabitation) among the Asian and Hispanic population runs between 25 and 50% in the younger cohorts. Any faculty member in the California State University system can attest that it is now nearly the norm to teach students who are, to take a few examples, one-quarter Asian, one-half Hispanic, or three quarters-white, many of whom decline to list themselves as official minorities of any sort on state forms.

We are quickly reaching the stage where the Chancellor's pie graphs evoke the racial categories of the Old Confederacy, as he tries to ascertain whether Jason Martinez, one-fourth Hispanic, or Na Wilson, half-Cambodian, should be counted as a minority.

Erosion on Campus

THEN THERE IS THE MATTER OF HYPOCRISY. As we have seen with Colorado's Chancellor Denton, there is one standard for some and another for the anointed. And as we know from Birgeneau's rhetoric, racial and ethnic symbolism is paramount; so if there is a statewide imbalance in the number of U.C. administrators of color, then his own presence is palpably a contribution to it. One of the reasons the people turned against affirmative action in the first place was that they tired of the preening of opportunistic senior white males, who adopted an *après moi le deluge* attitude toward the younger generation: remonstrating about the need for punitive hiring criteria that they almost certainly never applied to themselves.

For some two decades, I often watched entire departments of 50-something white male philosophy and English professors, themselves often hired ABD ("all but dissertation": a graduate student who hasn't finished his thesis) in the booming job markets of the 1960s—and who subsequently became mostly unpublished and undistinguished classroom teachers—take it upon themselves to hire only minorities and women, lecturing passed-over young white males about the need for diversity. These entrenched and often mediocre senior professors did everything for the cause except take early



retirement, though many advised the perennially exploited part-time instructors to “move on” or “get a life.”

In the Chancellor’s defense, it might be said that he realized the liability of being a white-male-Canadian-physicist in the racial cauldron of Berkeley—and grasped that he was hired precisely because he was known as a “diversity” president back at the University of Toronto, one prone to giving soapbox lectures with the same mind-numbing slogans and clichés he tried out right away at Berkeley.

Birgeneau urges “equity” and “access,” but does not apply those inflexible, numbers-based egalitarian strictures to himself. Chancellor Denton, even worse, *adopted* the very kind of discriminatory insider-dealing policies she denounced in her praise of diversity and its handmaiden, affirmative-action hiring. Professor Churchill wishes to revolt against our capitalist system but does not reject its furnishing of his ample salary; his deer-in-the-headlights President doesn’t know what to do except retreat to the easy slurs of “McCarthyism.” And Harvard’s President Summers learned the hard way that today’s campus gender autocrats will aggressively put down any attempts to question the unfortunate status quo.

No wonder that Summers’s brand of candid common sense—Are race policies what we want? What *does* account for student success? Do public administrators have any responsibility toward the taxpayers who fund them?—is in short supply, even with Summers himself. Administrative failure or success is not measured by keeping tuition increases within moderate limits or turning out better-educated graduates, but by conspicuous concern for racial and sex-

ual agendas. Those who pay them lip-service, such as Denice Denton, have plenty of leeway in other areas. Those who don’t, like poor Larry Summers, do not.

In the end, why should we care about a few high-flying administrators who feel that diversity is the engine that runs the university? Because the U.S. is struggling in an increasingly competitive world in which Europe, China, Japan, and India vie for global talent and national advantage through merit-based higher education. They don’t care about the racial make-up of the teams that create breakthrough gene therapies or software programs, but only whether such innovations are valuable and superior to the competition.

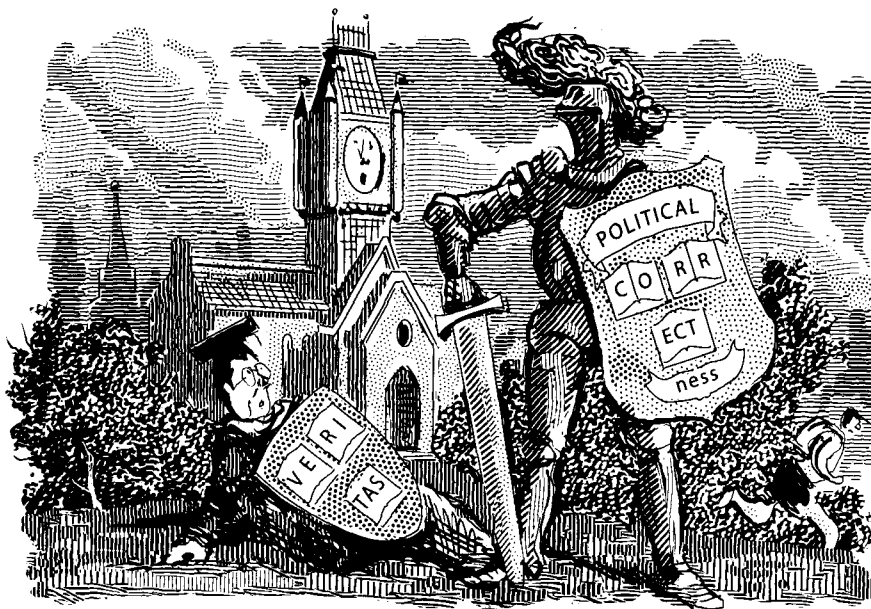
As our own industrial, agricultural, and manufacturing sectors decline, and as we suffer from increasing national debt, trade deficits, energy dilemmas, and weak currency, Americans have maintained relative parity largely through information-based technology and superior research—all predicated on a superb system of higher education. At some point, Summers, Denton, Hoffman, and Birgeneau might have wondered what precisely was the system that produced their lavish salaries and great campuses—and what protocols of merit, transparency, intellectual honesty, and scholarly rigor were necessary to maintain them.

More importantly, we have lost sight of what university presidents are supposed to be. Their first allegiance ought to be to honesty and truth, not campus orthodoxy masquerading as intellectual bravery amid a supposedly reactionary society. In a world of intellectual integrity, Robert Birgeneau would ask, “Why are Asians excelling, and what can Berkeley

do to encourage emulation of their success by other ethnic groups?” Denice Denton might wonder whether open hiring, monitored by affirmative action officers, applies to university staff or only those who are not associates of the President. President Hoffman would decry Ward Churchill’s crass behavior and order a complete review of affirmative action and the politicized nature of hiring, retention, and tenure practices at Colorado. And Larry Summers? In the old world of the campus, he would defend free inquiry and expression, and remind faculty that all questions are up for discussion at Harvard. And if self-appointed censors wished to fire him for that, then he would dare them to go ahead and try.

The signs of erosion on our campuses are undeniable, whether we examine declining test scores, spiraling costs, or college graduates’ ignorance of basic facts and ideas. In response, our academic leadership is not talking about a more competitive curriculum, higher standards of academic accomplishment, or the critical need freely to debate important issues. Instead, it remains obsessed with a racial, ideological, and sexual spoils system called “diversity.” Even as the airline industry was deregulated in the 1970s, and Wall Street now has come under long-overdue scrutiny, it is time for Americans, if we are to ensure our privileged future, to re-examine our era’s politicized university.

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Book Review by Michael Anton

BIG MAN ON CAMPUS

I am Charlotte Simmons, by Tom Wolfe.
Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 676 pages, \$28.95



USUALLY WHEN A REVIEWER COMPLIMENTS an author on his timing, he means it as an insult, a way of damning with faint praise. But if the author's intention is to explain what is going on all around us at a given moment, and to record it for posterity, then saying that he has a genius for timing is high praise indeed.

Since he first started writing feature stories for the *New York Herald Tribune* in the early 1960s, Tom Wolfe has had great timing. Before people figured out that the 1960s were really "the Sixties" he had already explained what was going on, and why, in a series of articles compiled into his first book. A year before Woodstock, when the only people who knew what a "hippie" was were the few honest burghers unfortunate enough still to be living across the street from the Golden Gate Park Panhandle, he published *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (1967). *Radical Chic & Mau-Mauing the Flak Catchers* (1970) appeared just as America was waking up to the fact that Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, generation of principled black leaders had given way to Huey Newton's gang of thugs. *The Right Stuff* (1979) was a delightful tonic to help offset the depressing pall of Vietnam, Watergate, and Malaise. Exactly one week before October 19, 1987—a.k.a. "Black Monday," a.k.a. "the Day the Money Died"—Wolfe published *The Bonfire of the Vanities*. He missed the mark a bit with *A Man in Full* (1998), but that's what happens when you take eleven years to finish a single book.

I am Charlotte Simmons hit the shelves one week after the 2004 election, just in time to explain to perplexed blue-staters what people in flyover country are really like, and to confirm Red America's worst fears about what really goes on way out there in the Blue. This was not really Wolfe's purpose—just as *Bonfire* was not written to predict the rise of Al Sharpton, and *Man in Full* was not supposed to be a *roman à clef* about the Enron, WorldCom, and Tyco fiascos. Wolfe's plots and characters may seem to be ripped from the headlines, to borrow a phrase, yet precisely the reverse is true. Wolfe is such a perspicacious reporter that he regularly scoops the headlines simply by getting to the story before anyone else. Even with the glacial delays of the publishing industry, and Wolfe's own...difficulties in meeting his (often self-imposed) deadlines, he still manages to beat the competition.

Wolfe has in fact marveled on more than one occasion that, in terms of literary material, he seems to have vast tracts of American life all to himself. He professes amazement that no hippie ever wrote a novel about the '60s that blew *Acid Test* out of the water. He describes the experience of writing *Bonfire* as one of constantly, furtively looking over his shoulder, terrified that some other novelist (Truman Capote?) would beat him to the punch with a big, Balzacian book about 1980s New York.

And he approached *Charlotte Simmons* with the same spirit. Dozens of "campus novels" have been written, from classics like *Lucky Jim* to clev-

er diversions like *Changing Places*. But most have been dreck. And, Wolfe noticed, the good ones as well as the bad ones were not so much "campus novels" as "faculty novels," written by English professors about English professors for English professors. No one had even tried to write a novel from the perspective of the students. Aren't students what the university is all about?

SO HERE WOLFE HAD, ALL TO HIMSELF, yet another big slice of American life. And he dove into it with gusto, traveling to a dozen or so campuses, sometimes spending weeks at a time, interviewing students, attending events from basketball games to frat parties to lectures. The result is, in many respects, typical for a Wolfe novel: long (676 pages); presented through the point of view of a handful of main characters (four as opposed to three in both *Bonfire* and *Man in Full*) and several minor characters; treating a vast range of themes, some at length, some cursorily; absolutely fearless about breaking politically correct taboos (more on this later); and larded with descriptions of minute details from clothing to food to physique to architecture.

Wolfe also uses essentially the same plot structure: concoct a central event, then describe how it plays out in the little microverse of the novel's setting and characters, like plunking an enormous rock into a glassy pond and recording the splash and the ripples.

Except this time it does not work so well. Critics friendly and unfriendly have argued



that plot is one of Wolfe's major weaknesses as a novelist. This is unfair. The plot of *Bonfire*, for instance, is as ingenious and intricate and precise as the innards of a Swiss watch. Once the rock of Sherman McCoy's "accident" is thrown into the pond that is New York City, the splashes and ripples play out exactly as they would and should. And all the various threads come together in ways that are, if sometimes too improbable to be plausible, at least always smile-inducing. *Charlotte Simmons*'s plot, on the other hand, never really gets off the ground. Wolfe can't seem to decide if the "rock" is a nascent cheating scandal or the encounter that two frat boys have with the governor of California. The former exists only to tie the four main characters together in a forced and unsatisfactory way. As to the latter, aside from being entirely implausible, the episode has no relation to the travails of *Charlotte Simmons*, and little to do with any of the other plot threads.

It is safe to say, however, that *Charlotte Simmons* is intended to be driven more by setting and character than by plot. As to the first, Wolfe's choice to make his "pond" a fictional as opposed to a real university is disappointing. It allows him a certain freedom, but this is not used entirely to good effect. We are supposed to believe, for instance, that Dupont ranks with Harvard in terms of prestige, with the University of Chicago in the '50s in intellectual rigor, and alongside Notre Dame and North Carolina in athletic dominance. To strain credulity in this way is to weaken, by choice, what should be one of the fundamental pillars of a "realistic" novel: a believable setting. Besides, setting the book at a real university would have been more interesting. Who wouldn't—when picking up a book of detailed social realism—rather read about a real place than a fake one? Choosing a real school would have allowed Wolfe's reporting skills to ferret out the minute, telling details that make real campuses unique, rather than inventing phony traditions that read as if they were borrowed from *Animal House*.

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FLAW IN THE book is Wolfe's steadfast refusal to treat the culture of protest and political correctness—or, to say better, the leftist politicization of all areas of study and all aspects of campus life—as serious threats to the university and its mission. In interviews, Wolfe has made his indifference to this theme a point of pride to show that, despite what certain critics may allege, he is not a creature of the political Right. His deeper rationale is the claim that though faculties and (to a lesser extent) administrators may be obsessed with political correctness, students these days hold

it in contempt. And there is indeed evidence of this. Yet enough students still take it seriously, and faculties still take it more than seriously enough, to make P.C. a major force at the vast majority of American colleges. P.C. does make several cameo appearances in *Charlotte Simmons*—in the classroom, at a gay-rights rally, in the university president's office. And two characters, one professor and one student, are clearly meant to embody its spirit. But they are minstrels, and the scenes are farces. One might say that such treatment perfectly reflects the intellectual quality of P.C. and its epiphenomena, and one would have a point.

Yet while P.C. may be completely unserious in itself, its effect on the university has been seriously awful. The decline of the humanities and social sciences—arguably the most important event in the history of American education, worthy of serious novelistic treatment—is given short shrift here, or else covered through the proxy issue of dumbing down courses for jocks. This is doubtless a real problem, and a real injustice, but compared to the catastrophic collapse of philosophy, classics, and comparative literature and the trivialization of so many other disciplines, it is a sideshow. In any case, one can only imagine how expertly Wolfe could have carved up P.C. and its ancillary phenomena had he turned his blade on them. Unfortunately, all we can do is imagine it. Similarly, one might wish that Wolfe had trained his fearless pen on the effects of quotas and double standards—euphemistically termed "affirmative action"—and told us what students of all colors really think of the practice. An honest discussion of these topics may not be allowed by current etiquette, but that's why Wolfe's analysis is especially needed—and especially conspicuous by its absence.

There is plenty to like about *I am Charlotte Simmons*. For instance, with this book Wolfe's ability to create and develop real characters takes a significant leap forward. This is a minority view. Most reviewers have made the usual anti-Wolfean charge that all his characters are cut-outs. Frat boy Hoyt Thorpe may be something of a stereotype, but then so too are many of the real frat boys on which his character is based (See Terrence Moore, "Wimps and Barbarians," *CRB*, Winter 2003). Ambitious nerd Adam Gellin's naked careerism (apparently called "résumé whoring" on campuses these days) is just unsavory enough to hint at the dark side of meritocracy. And it too is based on an all-too-real phenomenon. One might argue that basketball star Jojo Johanssen's interest in Socrates is implausible, yet through interior monologues his motives are explained clearly and convincingly;

and in any case the charge of implausibility would seem to militate against the charge of stereotyping.

But no one argues that the title character is a cut-out. On the contrary, blue-staters declare confidently that no one as innocent and earnest as Charlotte could possibly exist. This shows an astonishing lack of understanding about how life is lived in those parts of the country which the coastal elites never visit but are dimly aware of, perhaps from a high-school geography class. An 18-year-old arriving in Cambridge from the Upper West Side, or in Berkeley from West Hollywood, may indeed experience no culture shock at all. But many making a less dramatic transition than Charlotte find themselves every bit as baffled, shocked, and appalled as the girl from Sparta, North Carolina, when the reality of life in Chester, Pennsylvania, begins to sink in. Right-of-center critics make the more apt point that a young girl like Charlotte, however plausible, is inconceivable without a firm grounding in religious faith. But religion plays no part in this novel, and one suspects that Wolfe's own misgivings about the subject have, once again, clouded his vision—just as they apparently inspired the odd choice to attribute a character's redemption in *Man in Full* to his discovery of the ancient Stoic writer Epictetus rather than (oh, I don't know, say) the Bible. Nonetheless, Wolfe's treatment of Charlotte's spiral into depression is convincing and gripping—and miles beyond anything he has even attempted with any other fictional character. Charlotte's willing Finlandization to the ways of Dupont is, sadly, all too plausible, if a bit anti-climactic to serve as a genuinely satisfying ending.

CHARLOTTE SIMMONS'S GREATEST strengths are its set pieces and the wealth of detail Wolfe teases out of environments that are familiar yet whose inner workings are sealed off from most of us. Perhaps only someone who has played big-time college basketball could say how accurate is Wolfe's portrayal of the dynamics of a Division 1A team, especially the interaction between the team's black stars and white second-stringers. To the outsider, it certainly all seems believable—and absolutely fascinating. The two scenes of on-the-court action—written in Wolfe's characteristic third-person-point-of-view overdrive—are as good and gripping as anything he has ever written, from Conrad Hensley's encounter with the auto impounders in *Man in Full* to Sherman McCoy's escape from the Bronx in *Bonfire*.

A lot of the publicity and reviews have focused on *Charlotte Simmons*'s depiction of the

Caligula-scale debauchery common among today's undergraduates. Wolfe has performed an invaluable service in reporting this to a wider public. A lot of critics wish he hadn't, and they have their reasons. By far the most common criticism of this book has been that Wolfe is too old to write it. A septuagenarian goes to college campuses and is shocked to find that students drink and have sex! But this is disingenuous, a way of changing the subject. Few reviewers deny the truth of what Wolfe describes. Fewer still—even those of a culturally liberal (not to say libertine) bent—are probably comfortable admitting, even to themselves, that things have gotten this bad. It is hard for blue-state critics simply to laugh off the de-

pravity presented here as harmless fun. But it is even harder for them to denounce it. That would imply an underlying moral judgment that they are not entirely comfortable making. More than that, it might force them to confront what contribution their own ideas about sex and drugs might have made to dragging us to these depths. Besides, all their rhetorical artillery has for decades been trained rightward, at religious prudes and other bluenoses, and it's too heavy and caked with rust to be turned on other targets, no matter how deserving. Much easier, then, just to denounce Wolfe.

Overall, these strengths—and there are many, many more of them—outweigh Charlotte Simmons's flaws by a significant mar-

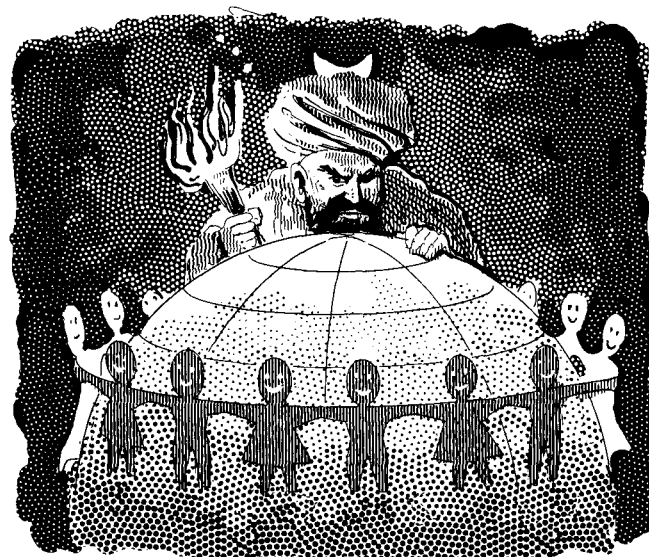
gin. The book is as compulsively readable as any of Wolfe's works, and as much a mirror of certain aspects of our time. Wolfe accomplished what he set out to do, and we should be grateful, because no other novelist would have dared it, nor been able to do it so well. Yet one could reasonably wish that he had set out to do more. For a long time our universities have needed—begged for—a talented, iconoclastic outsider to come along and give a full and brutally honest account of all their follies and excesses. Wolfe's offering is brutally honest as far as it goes, but it is not quite, as we might have hoped, a Book in Full.

Michael Anton is a writer living in New York City.

Book Review by Glen E. Thurow

IDENTITY CRISIS

Defining Americans: The Presidency and National Identity, by Mary E. Stuckey.
University Press of Kansas, 336 pages, \$35



IN THE AFTERMATH OF 9/11, WE FIND OURSELVES in a war in which it is difficult to identify the enemy. Is our enemy Osama bin Laden and his followers alone, as John Kerry sometimes maintained in the last presidential campaign? Or the states in the Middle East that harbor them? Or Islam? Or some branch of Islam? Or some heresy within some branch of Islam? One cannot intelligently fight a war without knowing who the enemy is.

We must also be able to distinguish our enemies from our friends. But in the war on terrorism, we also find this difficult to do. Is the House of Saud our enemy despite outward

manifestations of support? Are France and Germany our friends despite outward manifestations of opposition?

Aristotle taught that there are different kinds of friendships, some based on mere pleasure or utility, but the deepest dependent upon a shared understanding of what is good and just. This deeper understanding tells us who we are as Americans. The topic of Mary Stuckey's book is thus a timely one. Through a study of presidential rhetoric, she seeks to aid us in forming a better definition of what it means to be an American. Stuckey, a professor of communication and political science at Georgia

State University, looks at past presidents not so much to ascertain this better definition, but to point out that their definitions have deficiencies that need to be overcome.

The book is a series of seven snapshots of the ways in which American presidents have defined Americans. The seven essays examine Andrew Jackson; the less-than-holy trinity of Millard Fillmore, Franklin Pierce, and James Buchanan; Grover Cleveland; Woodrow Wilson; FDR; Dwight Eisenhower; and the elder George Bush. In each case, Stuckey attempts to show how the rhetoric of presidents has tended to either include or exclude various groups from full partici-



pation in the political and cultural life of the nation. The pattern of inclusion and exclusion, she argues, is based upon the necessity of preserving and protecting the coalitions that won them the White House in the first place. Though the trend has been towards a gradual inclusion of groups in the national mix, the defect in these presidents' rhetoric is a tendency toward "a seamless, linear, univocal articulation of America," one that serves to suppress alternative voices and restrict political opinions.

The book does not proceed under the assumption that we can learn from past presidents a good definition of the United States. Rather it accepts without examination the multicultural definition of America, and by this standard judges past presidents. The perfect America—perhaps impossible, but nevertheless an ideal to be sought—is one in which no cultural group is excluded and all are equally respected. America's identity, then, is to "celebrate our plurality of identities."

The attacks of 9/11 revealed the inadequacy of this ideal for anyone with eyes to see. The attacks showed that there was at least one group, one murderous culture in the world that was not our friend and did not wish to be our friend.

Nonetheless, Stuckey conceives of America as a kaleidoscope of different groups. America's identity is therefore different at every moment, rendering impossible any definitive answer to the question of what America is. But Stuckey does not see that even this view would require that which she abhors, namely, the need "to suppress alternative voices and restrict political options," because one would need to suppress the voice of any group that defined America in opposition to multiculturalism.

Stuckey's theoretical confusion perhaps explains the strange anomalies of her analysis. If one had decided, as Stuckey has, to examine presidential rhetoric in order to see how America has been defined, it would make most sense to examine those presidents who were in office at the times in which American identity was most in question. The two obvious times are the founding, when the country was yet to be formed, and the Civil War, when disputes over the meaning and character of America led to calamity. The

two most important presidents to examine would be George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Yet Stuckey scarcely mentions either one, without justification for her neglect.

It would be difficult to examine Lincoln's rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion without rejecting Stuckey's analysis. The group Lincoln would exclude in defining America would be the Southern slave-owners and their sympathizers who thought that slavery was justified by the laws of both man and God. Lincoln was willing to wage a terrible war to prevent proslavery opinion from dominating the Union, and as a result the slave-owners' culture was entirely destroyed. In Stuckey's view, Lincoln would have to be considered the greatest villain in American history for being completely intolerant of almost half the country. At the same time, he must be its greatest hero for including the slaves in America. Yet the latter was possible only because of the former.

STUCKEY HAS DIFFICULTY DEFENDING her thesis even though she restricts her gaze to less revealing and troublesome figures. In fact, she is compelled at times to be morally and politically obtuse in order to maintain her argument. An interesting case is that of the Mormons. She treats the statements of various 19th-century presidents critical of the Mormons as yet another example of the willful, improper exclusion of groups with a culture at odds with the dominant one. But she never asks, for instance, whether Brigham Young ruled as a kind of theocratic despot incompatible with American democracy, as President Buchanan alleged, or whether the practice of polygamy is irreconcilable with the equality of men and women, as President Cleveland alleged. Stuckey wishes to avoid making any moral or political judgment about a group, no matter how reasonable, for fear someone, anyone, will develop the habit of making exclusionary judgments.

But one cannot judge a group's inclusion or exclusion from America as good or bad without an understanding of what America is. This is perhaps a second reason why Stuckey does not look at Lincoln, for he gave a powerful answer

to that question, one that Stuckey disdains. As Lincoln stated succinctly in the Gettysburg Address, he held the United States to be a nation "conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." And as he explained in a speech in Chicago in 1858, there are many Americans who have no ties of blood to those who wrote the Declaration of Independence. Yet when they hear the phrase *We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal*, Lincoln said, they

feel that that moral sentiment taught in that day evidences their relation to those men, that it is the father of all moral principle in them, and that they have a right to claim it as though they were blood of the blood, and flesh of the flesh of the men who wrote that Declaration, and so they are.

Different cultures can unite together as one country, he believed, because the country was founded on principles that transcend them all.

Stuckey rejects this view of America without considering it, and it is clear why. Lincoln views human beings as individuals, possessing "certain unalienable rights," rather than as creatures defined by the group to which they belong and by the government that recognizes and often rewards them. In Stuckey's view, to address Americans in terms of the rights they all share is to deny differences like "race, gender, ethnicity, sexual preference, age, or disability," which to deny is itself a form of oppression. She complains, for example, that after women gained the vote, the presidential attention given them as a group declined, for "they now became invisible again, vanished into the mass of citizenry."

U.S. presidents have much to teach us about what it means to be an American, but one cannot learn that from Stuckey. She claims to see American history as a continual conversation about what being American means. But the first step in a proper conversation is to listen to what the other person has to say; and she will have none of that.

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Essay by Adam Wolfson

BETWEEN IDEALISM AND REALISM

We must walk in new ways, or we can never encounter our enemy in his devious march.

—Edmund Burke

NO ONE SEEMS TO KNOW QUITE WHAT to make of the foreign policy of George W. Bush. Realists attack him for his excessive idealism, but idealists want nothing to do with the man or his policies. Most liberals view the Bush policy as arrogant or hypocritical or cynical, or all of the above. For certain conservatives, the Bush policy in its universalism is an ugly stepchild of the French Revolution. Meanwhile, his supporters often do not agree on what they are supporting. Some characterize his policies as a kind of idealism; others, taking a contrary view, describe his policies in terms of a higher realism or natural law. As for intellectual sources, supporters and critics have variously invoked Thomas Paine, John Quincy Adams, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Harry Truman, John F. Kennedy, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, Leo Strauss—even Jesus Christ.

The Bush Doctrine, in truth, defies easy definition or classification. The twin pil-

lars of Bush's policy—aggressively spreading democracy, while forcefully preempting emerging threats—are as unfamiliar to recent American foreign policy as their combination is unsettling. As a result, his overall strategy has been at times grossly misunderstood and caricatured. To label Bush and the other key architects of his policy “neocons” is to substitute polemics for serious analysis. Bush has transformed American foreign policy, at least in terms of its contemporary practice, and so our first step should be to understand what he has accomplished.

We might begin by considering the ways he has diverged from, even upended, the two main schools of foreign-policy making in the United States—idealism and realism. Both in terms of the principles he has set forth, and the policies he has implemented, Bush has pretty much abandoned these two longstanding approaches. By bringing the Bush policy into fuller view, and clearer focus, we shall be in a better position to consider possible problems and complications. What's not entirely clear is whether Bush's new thinking has adequately taken account of the possible

constraints imposed upon it by America's own polity as well as certain deeper political realities.

No Ordinary Idealist

REALIST AND CONSERVATIVE CRITICS accuse Bush of being a reckless Wilsonian. In his rhetoric, he does frequently reach Wilsonian heights, as when in his Second Inaugural he declared America's “ultimate goal” to be “ending tyranny in our world.” Nonetheless, it's a safe bet that were Wilson still with us today he would have flatly rejected Bush's foreign policy. And with a few possible exceptions—the liberal intellectuals Paul Berman and Michael Ignatieff come to mind—Wilson's heirs in the Democratic Party have vigorously opposed it. Bush has not even gained the backing of the *New Republic's* neo-liberal editors. This is not really very surprising, since if Bush is an idealist of sorts he is certainly no Wilsonian. Leave aside some of the obvious ways in which Bush violates the Wilsonian spirit: his rejection of the Kyoto Protocol, the International Criminal Court, and the land



mine treaty; his refusal of NATO assistance in the Afghanistan intervention; his go-it-alone approach to Iraq. Bush is a unilateralist, not a Wilsonian internationalist. But even his "idealism" varies greatly from what passes for idealism on the Left today.

Bush believes in the promotion of democracy, but his conception and implementation of this goal is at once too broad and too narrow to please modern-day idealists. One of Bush's most persistent themes is the universalism of human rights. "We [Americans] believe that liberty is the design of nature,... [and that] it is the right and capacity of all mankind," he remarked in a November 2003 address. As James Ceaser and Daniel DiSalvo pointed out in the *Public Interest* (Fall 2004), the linkage of human rights and nature's design draws on early modern political thought. One hears in the invocation of nature's design an echo of the Declaration of Independence's "Laws of Nature and Nature's God," not Woodrow Wilson, who was himself a great critic of the natural-rights underpinnings of the American Founding.

The broadly universalist thinking behind the Bush Doctrine is anathema to modern liberals in general and to the Democratic Party's foreign policy establishment in particular. Of course, liberal foreign policy thinkers believe in human rights; but they are unlikely to see rights as nature's, much less God's, design for human beings. Rights are said to be a kind of social construct in the service of certain cultural, political, or class interests, for example, of the bourgeoisie. Having supposedly demystified natural rights, the Left is more likely to speak of certain economic rights, like the right to health care, or certain cultural rights, such as the right to self-determination. They tend to view "human rights" as in fact a cultural preference of Westerners, and thus Bush's championing of democracy can appear to them as a form of imperialism or chauvinism.

But if Bush's foreign policy is too universalist for modern liberal tastes, it can also seem too particularistic. Crucial to classical idealism is the priority of justice over self-interest or mere national security. Woodrow Wilson considered the emphasis on self-interest as not only unfair to others but degrading to ourselves. As he put it in his famous Mobile, Alabama, speech of October 27, 1913:

It is a very perilous thing to determine the foreign policy of a nation in the terms of material interest. It not only is unfair to those with whom you are dealing, but it is degrading as regards your own actions.... Human rights, national integrity, and opportunity as against material

interests—that, ladies and gentlemen, is the issue we now have to face.

Many decades later, President Jimmy Carter would make a similar point in his renowned Notre Dame address of May 1977. He chided Americans for their "inordinate fear of Communism"—that is, their preoccupation with national interest—and instead urged them to put "the new global questions of justice, equity and human rights" at the center of U.S. foreign policy.

Bush shows none of the liberal idealist's antipathy for the material interests of the nation. Indeed, in Bush's view, there is a strong link between the promotion of democracy abroad and our safety at home. In his defense of the Iraq war, he has stated: "America's interests in security and America's belief in liberty both lead in the same direction: to a free and peaceful Iraq." And speaking more generally of the war on terror he has argued: "We seek the advance of democracy for the most practical of reasons: because democracies do not support terrorists or threaten the world with weapons of mass murder."

Bush's promotion of democracy is selective, or we might say differently applied to different regimes and regions. His is no pure idealism, and in this sense, the Bush Doctrine is too narrow to appeal to modern-day idealists. In the Bush Doctrine, national interest seems to determine where and when the United States will promote democracy. Given Bush's lofty Wilsonian rhetoric, such discretion is not always obvious. But consider the implications of his with-us-or-against-us policy, formulated at the very outset of the war on terror:

Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.

This policy has been widely denounced on the Left and the Right for its supposed simplicity and rigidity, but in fact it is just this policy that allows for considerable operational flexibility. A country like Pakistan, by breaking its links with al-Qaeda and assisting us in Afghanistan, came to be regarded as an ally in the war on terror—and without moving so much as an inch in the direction of democratic reform. But Arafat's Palestine, by continuing to promote radical Islamist terrorism became exhibit "B," only behind Iraq's exhibit "A," in Bush's attempt to promote democracy. Such prudential application of absolute principles, all

in the service of America's self-interest, does not endear Bush to idealism's liberal guardians.

Indeed, in the view of today's self-styled idealists, Bush had gotten things exactly backwards. The Left views Pakistan's General Pervez Musharraf as a thug, while they always lionized Yasser Arafat as the rightful representative of the rights of the Palestinian people. Their idealism dictated support for Arafat and, so to speak, regime change in Pakistan. Two important intellectual transformations made such quixotic judgments possible. First, by abandoning any notion of natural law, the Left was free to view Arafat's terrorism as unimportant—or even as *necessary* in the struggle for Palestinian national liberation. To the Left, "Arafatism" was Idealism. Second, having rejected the legitimacy of national interest, the Left was free to overlook Pakistan's strategic importance, as well as the pernicious effect of "Arafatism" on American interests in the larger Arab world.

Bush's idealism thus breaks with the Left's version on two crucial points: It is rooted in a universal standard of human rights or dignity, and it is tempered by prudential concern for our national security.

Preemptive Realism

IF BUSH IS NO IDEALIST, DOES HE BELONG to the party of realism? Certainly, one line of interpretation holds that Bush's foreign policy of unilateralism, preemption, and power politics bears all the hallmarks of realism. But Bush himself has gone out of his way to criticize realism by name, and the truth is that his policies have possibly gained even less support from modern-day realists than from idealists. With a few possible exceptions—Henry Kissinger comes to mind, as does Fareed Zakaria at least in his initial support of the Iraq war—most realists have been aghast at Bush's foreign policy. Both conservative realists like Brent Scowcroft, national security advisor under Presidents Gerald Ford and Bush I, and liberal realists like Zbigniew Brzezinski, national security advisor to Carter, have denounced the Bush Doctrine as something akin to heresy. The principal journal of foreign-policy realism, the *National Interest*, has become an increasingly fierce critic of the Bush Doctrine.

A major stumbling block for realists is, of course, Bush's democratic faith. Owen Harries once stipulated, in his "Fourteen Points for Realists," published in the *National Interest* (Winter 1992/93), that the United States "should certainly not make the promotion of democracy a major—let alone the centerpiece—feature of its policy." Realists just don't go in for that sort of thing. But beyond that, even the

more “realist” elements of Bush’s policy—preemption, in particular—have in some sense transcended the conventional realism of our day. And thus we should try to understand this element of the Bush Doctrine in particular.

According to the administration, the old international standard of preemption needed to be rethought to take account of the new terrorist threats. In the day when an adversary’s intentions were clearly visible in troop movements and the massing of armies, Daniel Webster’s 1837 formulation of preemption was perhaps adequate: there must be demonstrated “a necessity of self-defense...instant, overwhelming, leaving no choice of means, and no moment of deliberation.” The administration called for a new standard in its national security strategy:

We must adapt the concept of imminent threat to the capabilities and objectives of today’s adversaries. Rogue states and terrorists do not seek to attack us using conventional means. They know such attacks would fail. Instead, they rely on acts of terror and, potentially, the use of weapons of mass destruction—weapons that can be easily concealed, delivered covertly, and used without warning... The greater the threat the greater is the risk of inaction—and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy’s attack. To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively.

Iraq became the first test of the doctrine (though the Afghanistan operation was also arguably an instance of preventive war). On March 19, 2003, with the Iraqi intervention begun, Bush addressed the American people from the Oval Office. “We will meet that threat now, with our Army, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard and Marines, so that we do not have to meet it later with armies of firefighters and police and doctors on the streets of our cities.” One could not have asked for a more succinct justification for preemptive war.

Looking Backward

WHAT’S INTERESTING IS THAT BUSH’S “new thinking” is in many respects based on some rather old thinking. The giants of the realist tradition, from Machiavelli to Alexander Hamilton, all defended preemptive (or really preventive) war. A quick look backward, therefore, might shed some light on the deepest meaning of Bush’s approach. Since

we are discussing American foreign policy, let us take Hamilton as representative of the tradition.

A curious passage appears in *The Federalist* on the question of preventive war. In the course of making short work of complaints by Anti-Federalists that the Constitution lacked a provision against standing armies in peacetime, Hamilton quite unexpectedly turned to the larger question of war and peace. Two great transformations clearly troubled him. First, he warned in *Federalist* 24 that though the America of his day was protected by “a wide ocean” from hostile European powers, the country could not count on this good fortune to last for long. “The improvements in the art of navigation have, as to the facility of communication, rendered distant nations, in great measure, neighbors.” But neighbors, in his view, do not as a rule act neighborly towards one another. In *Federalist* 6, Hamilton had argued that it is an “axiom in politics that vicinity, or nearness of situation, constitutes nations’ natural enemies.” If one couples Hamilton’s concerns about the progress of technology with his “axiom of politics,” one reaches some rather sobering conclusions about war and peace. Far from the “perpetual peace” of Immanuel Kant’s dream, Hamilton forecasts a state of perpetual war, as technology brings nations into closer and more violent contact.

In *Federalist* 25, Hamilton marked a second transformation: the rules and practices of war are in flux. In particular, he observed, “the ceremony of a formal denunciation of war has of late fallen into disuse.” This would prove to be a serious development, but especially if the United States were to remain, as some leading Americans of Hamilton’s day desired, without a standing army or navy. Hamilton drew out the implications of their pacifist views:

The presence of an enemy within our territories must be waited for as the legal warrant to the government to begin its levies of men for the protection of the State. We must receive the blow before we could even prepare to return it. *All that kind of policy by which nations anticipate distant danger and meet the gathering storm must be abstained from, as contrary to the genuine maxims of a free government (emphasis added).*

The option of preventive war, which Hamilton only obliquely suggests here, he openly defended a decade later, when the two transformations that had concerned him were already well underway. In the late 1790s, revolutionary France had embarked on an unde-

clared “quasi-war” against the United States. Eventually, President John Adams would consider whether officially to declare war on France, and Hamilton was active in war preparations. He penned a series of newspaper columns that, not unlike *The Federalist*, were directed at American public opinion. In making his case against French aggression, Hamilton offered a truly sweeping defense of preventive war:

There is no rule of public law better established, or on better grounds, than that when one nation unequivocally avows maxims of conduct dangerous to the security and tranquillity of others, they have a right to attack her and to endeavor to disable her from carrying her schemes into effect. They are not bound to wait till inimical designs are matured for action, when it may be too late to defeat them. (From “The Stand,” April 4, 1798.)

Hamilton was surely exaggerating the consensus in public law on this matter. But what’s most significant for our purposes is that here, as in *The Federalist*, he makes no mention of imminence or the need for tangible evidence of hostile intent. The mere avowal of “maxims of conduct dangerous to the security and tranquillity of others”—what today we might rather imprecisely call a hostile “ideology”—is enough, in his judgment, to justify preventive war.

Gathering Storms

BUSH’S FORMULATION TO SOME EXTENT echoes Hamilton’s. Neither Bush nor Hamilton emphasizes imminent danger, as would Daniel Webster. Quite to the contrary, the point for Hamilton, as for Bush, is distant dangers. Hamilton recommends a preventive war stratagem to meet “the gathering storm”—just as Bush over two centuries later would justify his preemptive strike on Iraq to meet “a grave and gathering danger.” It was a policy Bush would reaffirm in his otherwise “idealistic” Second Inaugural, calling it his “most solemn duty” to protect the country from “emerging threats.” Similarly, Bush’s emphasis in his Second Inaugural on tyranny’s universal threat is, in its way, a reflection of Hamilton’s warning against dangerous maxims. Both Bush and Hamilton show a keen awareness of the role ideas play in shaping reality and, ultimately, in determining the fate of nations.

Today’s realists, it is true, claim Hamilton as one of their own, but their realism is pinched by comparison. More so than their classical forebears, modern-day realists emphasize stability above all else while overlooking the pow-



erful role ideals play in the shaping of human affairs. In his "Fourteen Points for Realists," Owen Harries argued that America's "principal concerns should be to maintain regional equilibrium and stability," and he cautioned against "listen[ing] to those who sneer at the maintenance of stability, order, and equilibrium." After America's Iraq intervention, Harries lamented that America "has become the greatest revisionist force, the greatest agent of change, in the world." Similarly, the liberal realist Zbigniew Brzezinski, in his book *The Choice* (2004), described the Bush policy of preventive war as "strategically regressive" and complained that it "lacks a balanced concern for order and justice." To modern-day realists, the Bush Doctrine with its emphasis on democracy-promotion and preventive war seems destabilizing and dangerous: never mind that the doctrine itself was a response to the shock of September 11. That realists cleave, still, to a nonexistent pre-9/11 status quo bespeaks a certain naïveté, or even a certain kind of idealism. Perhaps this is one reason Bush in his addresses so often charges that those "who call themselves 'realists'" have in fact "lost contact with a fundamental reality."

Doctrinal Difficulties

BUSH THEN IS NEITHER AN IDEALIST NOR a realist. The president has artfully combined elements of both traditions, while at the same time transforming them. Perhaps most importantly, Bush's "idealism" has sought to link the pursuit of national interest with the pursuit of justice, while his "realism" has led him to embrace the destabilizing policy of preemption. Bush is guided by idealist principles, to be sure, but their application depends, at least to some extent, upon the nation's security requirements. After all, Bush has not invaded Cuba. In light of the challenges of September 11, Bush's new approach is to be welcomed, and its successes are many. He has (so far) thwarted any further September 11-like assaults on this country, toppled two anti-American dictators, defanged another in Libya, and midwived democratic elections in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Palestinian territories—all of which has apparently created a ripple effect, at least for now, in much of the Middle East.

But for all of its inventiveness the Bush Doctrine is not without its theoretical difficulties, and these tensions at the level of theory are felt, sometimes with serious consequences, at the policy and political levels. Let's begin with the Bush Administration's efforts to combine an idealistic policy of democracy-promotion with a policy of preventive war. The underlying assumption or hope of democracy-promotion is

perpetual peace. The basic idea is that democracies don't go to war with one another, and thus the spread of democratic principles and practices throughout the planet will enhance America's security while leaving all countries better off. Yet as we have seen, the assumption underlying preventive war is nearly the opposite: a world of perpetual war, in which one's guard must always be up.

Is it really possible to promote democracy in the name of world peace, while threatening preventive war? This is one of those theoretical conundrums that is perhaps less serious than it seems at first. The truth is that no politician can succeed in America who is not an optimist. The media clobbered George W. Bush when he suggested in the midst of the 2004 election that we faced an endless war on terror. "I don't think you can win it," he told Matt Lauer of the "Today" show. Bush's comment was immediately labeled a "blunder," and the president beat a hasty retreat the next day. One simply cannot say that kind of thing in a modern democracy and survive politically. After all, modern democracies, as Bush is wont to point out, are by their nature hopeful and peace-loving. Even as tough a fellow as Hamilton, living in a less sentimental age than our own, was unwilling to raise the prospect of preventive war directly. His discussion of it in *The Federalist* was, to say the least, circumspect. The following might be concluded: Perpetual peace is our hope, but until that day arises, preventive war will necessarily remain an option. One is reminded that a foolish consistency is indeed the hobgoblin of little minds.

Yet Bush's promotion of democracy faces another difficulty, one that is not so easily finessed. Bush's rhetorical emphasis is on democracy as *the* key to America's security and world peace. He speaks frequently of "the great democratic movement" and "our commitment to democracy." In these rhetorical tropes he is, one suspects, drawing on an idea usually associated with the late 18th and early 19th centuries that republics, unlike monarchies, are peaceful. In part the argument ran that if the people are given a say, wars fought for honor and glory will find few votaries. But a more central part of the theory was what became known as *doux commerce*—namely that the values and habits associated with commerce encourage peace. The emphasis of such philosophers as Montesquieu and Hume was on the *commercial* republic, not democracy per se. It was the new bourgeois man who would have little interest in war, so busy would he be to tending his self-interest. And then too the emphasis was on the *representative* republic, not pure democracy, since it was widely believed that the people *en masse* would act foolishly and rashly, following their passions

rather than their true interests. The philosophers of the commercial, representative republic were too familiar with ancient history to be sanguine about democracy's prospects. Athens may have been the world's greatest democracy, but it was also belligerent in the extreme.

Taking Regimes Seriously

WHEN BUSH GETS DOWN TO SPECIFICS about his democracy program, he's almost always sure to discuss the place of commerce. His national security strategy devotes several pages to the promotion of "free markets and free trade," and in his address to the National Endowment for Democracy he specified among the "essential principles" of a "successful society" privatized economies and the right to property. Bush has also made clear that by "democracy" he really means a *liberal* democracy, or a regime that embodies the rule of law, religious toleration, freedom of speech, and respect for women. But these details can be easily missed in his more sweeping calls for democracy and freedom. Elections by themselves do not overcome extremism. Iran is in many respects more "democratic" in terms of its political institutions and traditions than Egypt, but also far more dangerous to America's security and world peace. In seeking to rally American and world opinion behind democracy, Bush risks adding to the confusion about what really matters: not simply elections but certain liberal and commercial habits of mind.

Despite these questions of emphasis, Bush's program of democracy promotion is a welcome reminder that not all political regimes are the same, and that this has serious consequences for America's security. The underlying thesis of Bush's democracy policy is that regime type is of the utmost consequence. It's more important to encourage democratic reform than to sign peace treaties or international agreements. Liberal democracies tend to keep their promises; tyrannies do not. In this regard, Bush's policy shows an unusual awareness of how the world really works.

But strangely, for all of Bush's emphasis on particular regimes and their characteristics, his administration seems to have thought little about America's own regime, and how it might hinder Bush's larger foreign-policy ambitions. If there is any country that typifies the commercial republic it is surely the United States. Americans have little taste for war. After nearly every major conflict, from World War I to the Cold War, the country has reduced its defense budget and defense preparedness. It is a striking fact that George W. Bush, who describes

himself as "a war president," has resisted efforts to increase significantly the defense budget or to enlarge the army. In the immediate weeks after the September 11 attacks Bush urged Americans to continue to go about their business, even to go shopping. This last comment was perhaps a gaffe on his part, but it was surely also a highly revealing one. It has been widely argued that up to 450,000 troops were probably needed in Iraq, but that the administration worried about gaining support at home for such a large force. Would Americans have stood for the necessary increase in troop levels, and would they have tolerated the possibility of greater casualties? This can be a hard thing to ask of a democracy, and the administration did not choose to put these questions to the test.

Justice and Necessity

AMERICA'S DEMOCRATIC CHARACTER poses other problems for the Bush Doctrine. Historically, democratic and commercial peoples have been reluctant to face up to threats until the actual blow has been landed. It took a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor to open America's eyes to the dangers of Nazi and Japanese aggression. Our response to al-Qaeda was initially of the same sort. September 11 was hardly al-Qaeda's first assault on American interests, or even the American homeland, but the American public and its leadership chose throughout the 1990s to look the other way. Such democratic quietude raises questions

about the feasibility of the Bush Doctrine over the long haul. Preventive war means responding decisively to emerging or partially hidden threats—threats that democratic peoples are loath to recognize.

One final difficulty with the Bush Doctrine: Even before the 2000 election Bush spoke of a "distinctly American internationalism"—by which he indicated his desire to break out of the old realism-idealism divide. Bush argued that we can best advance America's security by acting on our ideals—that is, by advancing democratic principles throughout the world. After the September 11 attacks, this theme became especially pronounced. Bush argued increasingly that there is no trade-off between our ideals and our interests, that the two are mutually reinforcing or even one and the same. By the time of his Second Inaugural this had become the moral lodestar of the Bush Doctrine: "America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one."

In so closely identifying America's interests with her ideals Bush may have taken a step too far. One should be able to embrace the basic justice of our cause without claiming, as Bush has now done, that our self-interest is simply synonymous with our ideals. One of the great themes of Thucydides' *History* was the tragic tension between interests and ideals or, in Thucydides' formulation, between necessity and justice. The *History* is a long lesson in how necessity comes to predominate over nearly all else in the relations among states. Thucydides does not say that necessity always eclipses jus-

tice, but he certainly does suggest that political leaders will often be compelled to disregard justice strictly understood, in order to secure their community's survival.

It seems unlikely that we Americans have suddenly cut this Gordian knot, and that in pursuing our interests or acting on our security, we will *always* be serving the larger cause of justice. As a nation that embodies in its founding understanding the rights of man, we may indeed be exceptional, and there may be less of a gap between our ideals and our interests than for most other states. Americans naturally tend to see in the triumph of human rights their own triumph, and vice versa. As they should. But Bush's attempt to dissolve the tension between our interests and our ideals is misguided. Regretfully, occasions will arise when our leaders will be compelled to commit seeming or real injustices for the sake of the country's survival. That this is an enduring, unpalatable truth of political life, especially in foreign relations, cannot be reasonably doubted by anyone. Our politicians should not be misled into thinking they have overcome this basic reality of political life, lest when the occasion arises, they lack the fortitude to do what is truly necessary.

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BEYOND VENUS AND MARS

Beyond Paradise and Power: Europe, America and the Future of a Troubled Partnership,
edited by Tod Lindberg. Routledge, 224 pages, \$19.95 (paper)



IN SUMMER 2002, ROBERT KAGAN SPARKED a vast trans-Atlantic discussion by publishing "Power and Weakness" in *Policy Review*, a journal edited by Tod Lindberg. Kagan subsequently developed and updated his argument in a widely reviewed little book, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order*. Now Lindberg has brought together a set of essays that aim in various ways to shed more light on Kagan's subject: American-European relations after the Cold War.

Kagan argued that differences in their relative levels of power are leading Europeans and Americans to develop very different ideas about how the world works and what their policies in it ought to be. Militarily well-endowed Americans are comfortable with unilateralism and the use of force, and uncomfortable with the constraints of international institutions. Militarily weaker Europeans are the opposite. From the start, there was something wrong with this argument. Military "weakness" may be attributed to the European Union's member states individually, but not to the E.U. collectively. As several authors in this volume point out, Europe has more than enough technology, money, and soldiers to compete with America militarily. It *chooses* not to. So instead of military weakness causing what Kagan calls "Kantian" norms, such norms seem to precede and cause the military weakness.

But this leaves standing his true contribution, which is to raise the twin issues of whether the tensions between Europe and America

are being caused by structural factors beyond the control of any one government, and depending on the answer to that, whether and how U.S. foreign policy after 9/11 should be adjusted in the face of those tensions. Kagan's answers are clear: tensions are the natural result of the power differentials. Thus U.S. foreign policy need not be bent to relieving them, though it might surely be more polite and address some European sensibilities with more care. Divergence, rather than being shameful, is merely tragic.

Structural arguments of this kind are well represented in Lindberg's book, though not Kagan's particular brand of them. Many of the contributors agree that a key source of the tensions between the two regions is, paradoxically, their joint victory in the Cold War. With the demise of the Soviet Union, Europe and the U.S. each felt freer to air the disagreements that are natural to such diverse industrialized nations. Francis Fukuyama offers another possible reason for thinking that the rift "is not just a transitory problem": the essentially cultural disagreement over whether it is nation-states (as most Americans believe) or international entities (as most Europeans think) that confer legitimacy on international policies. All such structuralist perspectives insist that there is no reason why the United States and at least some of the major European powers should not return to the on-and-off friendships that characterized them, say, before 1914, even if they cannot return to the tight alliance of the

Cold War days.

Such structuralism is rejected especially by those who blame the trans-Atlantic breach on the Bush Administration and its so-called unilateralism, whether in spurning the Kyoto treaty or invading Iraq. Some critics predict, therefore, that other countries will eventually form "balancing" coalitions against America. In this volume, Gilles Andréani, a French Foreign Ministry official, calls U.S. policy after 9/11 "neo-imperialist" and tars neocons as "the extreme Right." Far more politely, Wolfgang Ischinger, Germany's Ambassador to the United States, laments needless provocation on all sides.

BUT WALTER RUSSELL MEAD AND Lindberg himself offer the book's most ambitious challenge to the thesis of a structural divergence between Europe and America. Each argues, broadly speaking, that the most powerful structural factors at work will continue to pull America and Europe *together* rather than apart. Mead, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, argues in effect that though Kagan may not be right about power balances now, he will be in the future, albeit for different reasons. Mead bases his argument on one of the most underappreciated long-term trends in today's world: America's growth in population and productivity is outpacing Europe's, so much so that we can foresee a massive resources gap opening between the two regions. So if the U.S. does not

overshadow Europe financially and militarily now, it will increasingly in coming decades. But even so, this superiority will still not permit the U.S. to have its way on every issue likely to arise in a world pressured by economic globalization, ethnic rivalry, and much else. The result, Mead says, is that both regions will continue to need each other more than they like or currently realize. A relatively diminished Europe will need the U.S. for obvious reasons, and Mead suggests with somewhat fewer details (and thus less persuasively) that the U.S. will need Europe to help deal with nettlesome regional problems.

LINDBERG TURNS AWAY FROM ALL THIS talk of money and power—toward culture. Is there any plausible chance of armed conflict within the Atlantic community in the foreseeable future? No, says Lindberg, and we must not lose sight of this remarkable fact. “[T]here is no point in human history prior to the end of the Second World War at which one could offer the same answer about any such group of countries.” This is the case, he says, because these countries are constitutive members of an “ethical community” whose fundamental point of agreement is that disagreements with one another are transacted peacefully. Thus in “no serious case do we think of each other as entirely ‘other.’” Our partially shared culture, in turn, constitutes a structural basis for good relations and cooperation, transcending occasional tensions over secondary issues. And the secondary issue at stake today concerns the circumstances under which force will be used against countries and regimes outside the Atlantic community.

This turns out to be a highly contentious issue. Moreover, what is at stake extends beyond European-American relations to the very future of these two regions in global politics. Several authors in this volume argue that the apparent European preference for international institutions, negotiation, and persuasion provides a model for conflict-avoidance and conflict-resolution for the rest of the world. Traditional realists and neoconservatives dismiss this assumption as distressingly naïve. Mead nicely captures the predominant American skepticism: addressing troublemakers with polite talk might work well among rich democracies, but the “rest of the world is not there yet and unlikely to get there quickly.” Fukuyama puts his own kind of spin on the issue: “The Europeans are certainly

right that they are living at the end of history; the question is, where is the rest of the world? Of course, much of the world is indeed mired in history, having neither economic growth nor stable democracy nor peace.”

In sum, many countries cannot be dealt with effectively if one’s policy of “force as a last resort” is, in reality, a policy of avoiding force at all costs, or agreeing to use force only in ridiculously implausible circumstances. Europeans acknowledge this *de facto*, but never doctrinally, when they limit membership in their own Union to countries that meet strict criteria, including stable democracy and much else besides. After all, since countries that fail to meet those criteria typically do so for deep-seated and not merely superficial reasons, this filtering mechanism recognizes—again, *de facto*—that countries are characterized by structural differences and that Europe’s modern methods work much better with some than with others. As Turkey knows only too well, the European Union’s list of important structural differences includes some that dare not speak their names. But Europeans are hesitant to declare all of this openly and in principle. The Bush Administration, by contrast, has been willing to admit that what works in certain contexts may not work in others. Europeans run the risk that their discretion will advantage them in the short term, because they are perceived as polite and sensitive, but disadvantage them in the long run, because American realism is more accurate and American methods more likely to be effective.

OF COURSE, THE DOOR CAN SWING both ways, with far less sanguine implications for America’s future. In her chapter, Kalypso Nicolaidis, a University Lecturer at Oxford University, accepts the distinction between more civil and rougher parts of the world, as well as the notion that the softer European approach may not be suitable for dealing with the latter. But that very distinction implies that the European approach may be *more* appropriate—and U.S. roughness unsuitable—to the more civil regions. Given the gradual spread of democracy and the ongoing economic development of states, Nicolaidis warns that America is tooling its foreign policy to deal with the diminishing number of admittedly dangerous rogue states while the E.U. plays better to the larger and growing number of countries that want to abide by the rules of international trade,

conflict resolution, and positive-sum cooperation. This makes the current U.S. strategy ultimately anachronistic. If this is right, then while the U.S. bears the costs of dealing with backwater trouble-spots, Europe will reap profits and status at the center of the world. Thus the different foreign policies of Europe and America may determine which region emerges, over the next 50 years, as the dominant liberal democratic force in the world.

BUT THIS VISION OF ULTIMATE EUROPEAN advantage is premature, because it is based on a badly misinformed conception of current U.S. grand strategy. Kagan’s provocative remark that “Americans are from Mars and Europeans are from Venus” was widely criticized for unfairly stereotyping Europeans, and some of the criticism became overly defensive. In this volume, for example, Timothy Garton Ash bridles at the implication that Europeans are feminine, and Ischinger has Kagan referring to “Euro-weenies,” an epithet which, to my knowledge, Kagan has never used. Still the overall point is well-taken: Europeans do not pursue a uniformly “soft” approach to the world, as anyone knows who has watched French guns cut down scores of Ivory Coast citizens demonstrating in their own capital city. But critics rarely insist that Kagan’s phrase also unfairly stereotypes Americans as militaristic and unilateralist.

Martial imagery usefully describes U.S. policy only toward a small number of countries. The war on terror is only one part of a larger foreign policy that predominantly focuses on such cooperation-heavy issues as trade and investment, international technical standards, immigration, and routine security matters. And even the war on terror is mainly being carried out through peaceful bilateral and multilateral cooperation on money-tracing, police surveillance, and intelligence-sharing. If anything, as Fukuyama points out, America is more consistently multilateralist on international economic matters than are the E.U. states. The notion that the United States is systematically martial is simply false. Which means the theory that the United States is ill-prepared to navigate the more civilized regions of the world is a delusion, which may give comfort to some people for the moment, but will ultimately discredit its votaries.

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HARDSHIPS OF WAR

In Defense of Internment: The Case for "Racial Profiling" in World War II and the War on Terror,
by Michelle Malkin. Regnery, 376 pages, \$27.95



ON FEBRUARY 19, 1942, ALMOST TWO and a half months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066. Citing the need to protect against espionage and sabotage, the order authorized the Secretary of War and military commanders designated by him "to prescribe military areas...from which any or all persons may be excluded, and with respect to which, the right of any person to enter, remain in, or leave shall be subject to whatever restrictions the Secretary of War or the appropriate military commander may impose in his discretion."

Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson promptly named Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, headquartered at the Presidio of San Francisco, as the military commander to implement the order. Within two weeks DeWitt established military zones covering Washington state, Oregon, California, and southern Arizona from which "such persons or classes of persons as the situation may require" would subsequently be excluded. Further orders resulted in the exclusion of approximately 112,000 people from the designated areas. Meanwhile, on March 21, 1942, Congress passed Public Law 503, criminalizing knowing violations of such orders. Most of the excluded population spent time in detention camps.

But this skeletal account obviously leaves out a key detail: practically all of the people thus "relocated" (or "evacuated") were of Japanese an-

cestry. About a third were Japanese immigrants (the Issei), who were aliens ineligible for citizenship under the naturalization law of the period, but the rest were American-born (mostly Nisei, or second-generation) and hence citizens. In the actual event, however, this further detail of citizenship proved no barrier to removal, nor did it condemn the program constitutionally in the eyes of the United States Supreme Court. Upholding first an initial curfew on the coast, in *Hirabayashi v. United States* (1943), and then the exclusion itself, in *Korematsu v. United States* (1944), the wartime Court essentially deferred to what it portrayed as the judgments of military commanders about military necessity "made without the benefit of hindsight." (In another case, *Ex parte Endo*, the Court ducked the issue of whether loyal citizens could constitutionally be detained. It gave Ms. Endo her freedom through a disingenuously narrow reading of Executive Order 9066 and Public Law 503 as not authorizing her continued detention.)

By contrast, from World War II down to the present, few scholars have had anything good to say about the relocation. Some solid, objective studies have nonetheless appeared. Particularly useful is Stetson Conn's careful reconstruction of the relocation decision itself. Conn, a civilian historian with the Army's Office of Military History, concluded that "the only responsible commander who backed the War Department's [mass evacuation] plan as a measure required by military necessity was the President himself,

as Commander in Chief." Yet Roosevelt gave the issue little attention. Until mid-February, General DeWitt himself had opposed removing citizens, but then developed his own comprehensive plan. Narrower in geographic focus than the War Department's subsequent plan, this proposed sweeping in 25,000 Japanese aliens and 44,000 citizens of Japanese descent, along with 64,000 German and Italian aliens.

SO WHENCE CAME THE WAR DEPARTMENT'S plan? Conn linked it especially to Major (and soon Lieutenant Colonel) Karl Bendetsen, a mobilized reserve lawyer in the Provost Marshal General's office. Shuttling back and forth between Washington, D.C., and San Francisco, Bendetsen in effect took every opportunity to ratchet upward the sweep of the proposed evacuation. In late January and early February 1942, Secretary Stimson and Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy themselves edged toward selective removal of citizens from high-risk areas. When the War and Justice Departments reached an impasse on handling citizens, Stimson and McCloy took the issue to FDR on February 11. Reporting the results to Bendetsen, McCloy stated, "We have carte blanche to do what we want to as far as the President's concerned." This produced the final rounds of consultations and planning, during which Stimson and McCloy shifted to favor mass removal. Executive Order 9066 followed, along with the orders from Stimson to

DeWitt to remove Issei and Nisei alike.

All of which brings us to Michelle Malkin's *In Defense of Internment*. Aiming "to provoke a debate on a sacrosanct subject that has remained undebatable for far too long," Malkin "challenges the religiously held belief that internment of enemy aliens and the West Coast evacuation and relocation of ethnic Japanese were primarily the result of 'wartime hysteria' and 'race prejudice.'" Her "central thesis...is that the national security measures taken during World War II were justifiable, *given what was known and not known at the time*" (her emphasis).

Besides wanting to set straight the record on the relocation program, she is worried that nowadays "[n]o defensive wartime measure that takes into account race, ethnicity, or nationality can be contemplated, let alone implemented, without government officials being likened to the 'racist' overseers of America's World War II 'concentration camps.'" In approaching her task, she is "not a professor whose tenure relies on regurgitating academic orthodoxy about this episode in American history." Instead, she describes herself as possessing the credentials of "an open mind, a willingness to reject political correctness as a substitute for thought, and the ability to view the writing of history as something other than a therapeutic indulgence."

ON MALKIN'S TELLING, WHAT WAS known at the time consisted partly of very public events. She relates how a Japanese pilot, returning from the Pearl Harbor attack with a punctured fuel tank, crash-landed on Niihau, a small island northwest of Honolulu, and received succor from a Japanese-American couple and a laborer born in Japan—even after they learned of the Pearl Harbor attack. The husband and wife went so far as to terrorize their fellow islanders and assist the downed pilot in an unsuccessful attempt to make radio contact with Japanese forces. Finally, a native Hawaiian couple, "[i]n their own 'Let's Roll' moment of heroism," overpowered and killed the pilot. The Japanese-American husband then committed suicide. According to naval intelligence officers in late January 1942, the episode revealed the potential for further collaboration, in the event of an invasion, between ethnic Japanese in the islands, both citizens and aliens, and Japanese forces.

Malkin's focus then broadens to the whole Pacific theater. After describing the shelling of oil fields near Santa Barbara by a Japanese submarine on February 23, 1942, she shifts back to early December. "[T]here were many phony rumors of sabotage and erroneous reports of attacks," she notes, but "for every false alarm, there were many more real and unsettling forays along our shores that, when added to Japan's

shocking military triumphs abroad, rightfully heightened America's anxiety." Japanese submarine activity off Hawaii and along the West Coast reinforced the shocked reactions to Pearl Harbor itself and to Japan's successes against American, British, and Dutch forces and possessions in the western Pacific. An opinion piece by Walter Lippmann, "the most influential columnist and preeminent liberal intellectual of the day," raised concern about "the enemy alien problem on the Pacific Coast, or much more accurately, the fifth column problem," as Lippmann described it. Malkin also relates the efforts of Japan to use schools and patriotic societies in Hawaii and on the West Coast to retain the loyalties of both Issei and Nisei.

MORE IMPORTANT STILL FOR THE decision-makers were intelligence reports. These disclosed a spy ring operating out of the Japanese consulate in Honolulu and another on the West Coast, each seeking to draw in Issei and Nisei as eyes and ears. In the aftermath of the December attack, moreover, naval and army intelligence agents stressed that spy networks were still in place. While doubting that the bulk of the Nisei were disloyal, the same agents as well as civilian investigators operating under FDR's orders suggested several thousand of them did pose threats. In late January 1942, the commission under Supreme Court Justice Owen Roberts, appointed to investigate the Pearl Harbor disaster, reported that Japanese spies in Hawaii had aided the attack. What gave still greater impetus was the Army's decrypting effort, code-named MAGIC, which broke the Japanese diplomatic codes. Army and Navy cryptologists were able to read the communiqués sent via commercial cable companies to and from Japan's embassy in Washington and its consulates in key cities. The MAGIC reports themselves were highly classified with only a few direct recipients, among whom were Roosevelt himself, Secretary of War Stimson, and Assistant Secretary McCloy, but *not* General DeWitt, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, or Attorney General Francis Biddle. The information contained in the reports nonetheless went to a broader group in sanitized form to disguise the source. (Public acknowledgement of MAGIC occurred just after World War II; declassification of the full set of documents began in the 1970s.)

Malkin finds evidence within both the MAGIC intercepts and their sanitized versions confirming the field agents' reports on Japanese espionage efforts within the continental United States and Hawaii, including the successful targeting of some Issei and Nisei. While it is true that MAGIC reports on domestic espionage ceased once Japan's diplomatic and consular op-

erations in the United States closed at the outbreak of war, MAGIC had already lent credence to the threat. Specifically, she argues, pre-war MAGIC reports about spying help explain the early evacuations from Terminal Island in Los Angeles Harbor (about which more below) and Bainbridge Island in Puget Sound, near the Bremerton Naval Shipyard. In addition, the puzzling extension of the exclusion area to include southern Arizona becomes understandable, for MAGIC had indicated that in case of war Japan would use Mexico as a base for its American intelligence operations.

Moving into an examination of the "internment" program in operation, Malkin provides useful clarifications. Strictly speaking, the "internment" label itself applied only to the detention of enemy aliens. Within days of the Pearl Harbor attack, federal officers, mainly in the Justice Department, began picking up German, Italian, and Japanese aliens already identified by intelligence sources as risks. Within a week, 2,451 were in custody nationwide, and by the end of the war 26,655 (11,229 of them Japanese) had been detained at one time or another, in 46 well-guarded camps around the country. Existing legislation, including the Alien Enemies Act of 1798, served as the basis for these detentions.

BY CONTRAST, PERSONS EVACUATED UNDER the War Department's West Coast program were not internees (although several thousand Nisei became such after renouncing their American citizenship). The Army's initial effort was to induce voluntary movement from the restricted military areas to locations further east. A variety of reasons, including limited individual resources and opposition from inland communities, made this approach unworkable, however, and mandatory removal followed. The evacuees went first into assembly centers up and down the coast, and then to ten relocation camps running from eastern California to Arkansas. These were run far more loosely than the internment camps for enemy aliens, and the civilian War Relocation Authority set up a program for screening the evacuees and granting leaves to those with acceptable records who could find employment outside the western states. By December 1944, when the mandatory program ended, about 35,500 had left the camps under these conditions. Another 4,300 college-age evacuees also received leaves, to study outside the West Coast.

How well does Malkin achieve her goals? Perhaps the first thing to note is that when *In Defense of Internment* appeared in August 2004, the ensuing exchanges in cyberspace proved she had succeeded in stimulating debate.



Critics blogged on and on, for pages and pages, with Malkin giving as well as she took. The evacuation/relocation program of World War II clearly remains a hot-button issue, not least because of its salience in the debates accompanying our own war on terror, but also because it had truly unsavory aspects. On the latter front, Malkin quickly disclaimed arguing that racism played no role. She did not intend to write a comprehensive account that would re-plow much-tilled ground.

BY MY READING, MALKIN OFFERS A largely fair assessment of the relocation program in operation, once the underlying decision occurred. It is not an assessment that will please those who equate it with the Nazis' death camps. To be sure, the relocation camps were "concentration camps," but in the older military sense: camps for concentrating and controlling a particular population. Life in them was spartan, but the War Relocation Authority sought to turn them into self-contained and self-governing communities. In this regard, success varied somewhat from camp to camp, with the center at Tule Lake, California, posing a particular problem after malcontents from other camps, along with several thousand evacuees who refused to swear loyalty to the United States, were moved there in July 1943. Overall, Malkin agrees that the actual removal and detention remained something of a work-in-progress after the first orders came down, and on occasion the program was bungled.

Where Malkin goes astray in handling the actual evacuation and ensuing detention, I believe, is in comments that range from off-putting and irrelevant to needlessly inaccurate. In the off-putting and irrelevant category is her observation that the cramped, sometimes crude quarters in three of the assembly centers were subsequently used by military personnel. This recalls Justice Hugo Black's majority opinion in the *Korematsu* case: "hardships are part of war, and war is an aggregation of hardships. All citizens alike, both in and out of uniform, feel the impact of war in greater or lesser measure." But the issue is whether the people caught up in the relocation should have been subjected to the hardships in the first place.

Needlessly wrong is her assertion that "[i]n upholding the constitutionality of the exclusion orders, the U.S. Supreme Court in *Korematsu v. United States* ruled that no one of Japanese ancestry was compelled 'either in fact or by law' to enter a relocation center." What Justice Black actually wrote and meant was something quite different. He wrote that had Fred Korematsu complied with orders and reported to an assembly center (rather than remain at large in the military area, as he did), the Court could

not "say either as a matter of fact or law, that his presence in that center would have resulted in his detention in a relocation center." Black's reasoning on the point was lawyerly: some who reported to assembly centers were "released upon condition that they remain outside the prohibited zone until the military orders were modified or lifted." Hence there was a small chance that if Korematsu had complied, he would not have been involuntarily taken to and detained in a relocation camp. By this route, the Court in *Korematsu* avoided reaching the constitutional validity of the detention program itself. But Black also explained that a separate part of the overall program (not at issue in *Korematsu*) was to "go under military control to a relocation center[,] there to remain for an indeterminate period until released conditionally or unconditionally by the military authorities." In short, Black conceded that "in fact" people were involuntarily detained in the relocation centers, and he carefully avoided stating that "by law" the program entailed no involuntary detention.

The brunt of criticism has fallen on Malkin's claims about the relocation as a response to a military threat perceived as real *at the time*. Unfortunately, she does not carefully sort out what was known at the time from what was not. One of Malkin's blogger critics quickly observed that the Japanese submarine's shelling of the oil field near Santa Barbara on February 23, 1942, could hardly have been a factor in the key decisions of the *preceding* several weeks. In response, Malkin noted that she had linked the shelling to the speeded-up evacuation of Terminal Island on February 25. This comes about 80 pages later.

Similar difficulties are explained away less easily. After describing the shelling episode, Malkin turns to Japanese operations in the Pacific immediately after Pearl Harbor and to Secretary Stimson's fear of raids against the American mainland. The reader then learns that Admiral Tamon Yamaguchi, a Japanese naval commander, had precisely this in mind. Relegated to a footnote is Malkin's qualification that the source from which she drew the episode "states that other Japanese officers were unenthusiastic about Yamaguchi's plan." She does not mention at all that Yamaguchi presented his plan at a conference on February 20-23, 1942, on board a Japanese battleship. Did Yamaguchi's plan help shape American thinking relating to the evacuation? Could it have? One suspects not. (Malkin covers herself, perhaps, by noting that similar ideas circulated in the Japanese media.)

Another problem of sequence emerges when the reader learns "[i]n the Philippines, Pulitzer Prize-winning author and statesman Carlos Romulo described massive Japanese espionage activity in the country prior to the

war." Malkin then provides several details. The source is a book by Romulo, one written and published following his arrival in the United States in June 1942. A bit further on, as added evidence for why Americans in late 1941 and early 1942 could reasonably have worried about the enemy in their midst, the reader learns that "Japan's surrender in 1945 came as a traumatic blow to many Hawaiian Issei," and that Tomoya Kawakita, a Nisei who served in Japan's army, "tortured scores of American POW's held in a Japanese prison camp." The torture occurred during the war, of course, and Kawakita was exposed after the war once he returned to Los Angeles.

MALKIN WOULD HAVE DONE BETTER by redirecting her efforts into a more careful investigation of the true role of intelligence reports in the decision to relocate the Issei and Nisei. The episode on Niihau Island in Hawaii, involving the downed Japanese pilot returning from the Pearl Harbor raid, is one example. The behavior of the Japanese-American couple that aided the pilot was "shockingly disloyal," as Malkin correctly labels it, and naval intelligence was right to take it seriously. Yet with respect to the naval intelligence reports on the episode that were filed in late January 1942, just after the release of the report by the Roberts Commission, Malkin only concludes that they "reinforc[ed] Roberts's assertions and, *presumably*, further exacerbat[ed] concerns among military leaders about the so-called 'Japanese situation'" (my emphasis). Did the Niihau reports from late January *actually* affect assessments of the situation on the *West Coast*? We don't find out, or even learn who received them. But one may doubt whether they added much to the felt urgency of the situation in late January, as suggested by Malkin, because on January 7 the Roberts Commission itself had heard similar testimony about the Niihau incident from Lieutenant George P. Kimball, a naval intelligence officer in Hawaii. (Malkin does not mention Kimball's testimony.)

As another example, Malkin writes, "Terminal Island in Los Angeles Harbor...had been singled out in MAGIC messages [note the plural] as a *hotbed* of Japanese espionage activity" (my emphasis). But among the MAGIC decrypts she references in the book, I find only one, from May 9, 1941, that bears on Terminal Island. She elsewhere quotes language from it twice. As far as I can determine, it is also the only MAGIC message on the point that appears among the many included in the book's ample appendices. The message, from Japan's Los Angeles consulate, included the brief statement, "We have already established contacts with ab-

solutely reliable Japanese in the San Pedro and San Diego area, who will keep a close watch on all shipments of airplanes and other war materials....” Does this remark reveal Terminal Island as “a hotbed of Japanese espionage”? In any case, Malkin’s “hotbed” comment itself, as quoted above, carries no footnote citation, but is followed by a discussion of a detailed report from naval intelligence about the Terminal Island population. The latter report established a good case for removing several hundred Kibei (Nisei who had spent time in Japan). Whether it supported a broader removal is less clear, for in a sentence not quoted by Malkin, it stated, “there do exist in this colony a great many known and trusted nisei...who are at present acting as observers and informers for the Naval Intelligence Service and the F.B.I.” Did MAGIC tip the scales? Perhaps. Perhaps not.

A similar question arises from a comment by Malkin about MAGIC’s impact on General DeWitt, whose own plan involved large-scale evacuation even though he opposed indiscriminate removal of the Nisei. Malkin writes, “It appears that DeWitt did not have clearance to MAGIC in early 1942, but he did have access to intelligence reports that were derived from MAGIC—reports that warned of Japanese-controlled espionage cells up and down the West Coast.” The MAGIC and MAGIC-derived reports undeniably testify to espionage activity, but did they disclose “Japanese-controlled espionage cells,” either to DeWitt or to his superiors in Washington who made the actual decision? From the evidence, this seems less certain.

Here Malkin could have done real service. By the time she wrote her book, critics had already roundly attacked claims by another author (David Lowman) about the warnings provided both by MAGIC and by other intelligence reports on the dangers posed by the

West Coast Issei and Nisei. Thus forewarned, Malkin might have carefully and systematically sorted out, as best the evidence allows, the actions of several groups that were or may have been involved in espionage activity: Japanese consular personnel, the disaffected whites and blacks whom Japan clearly hoped to recruit, sympathetic Issei, similarly-inclined Nisei within the civilian population, and Nisei in the armed forces (mentioned in one of the decrypts). She also might have systematically sifted information that Japanese consular officials derived from open sources—she mentions the *Los Angeles Times*—from what “presumably was based on surveillance or espionage by Japan’s agents.” One wonders, too, how many of the culprits had already been interned as enemy aliens.

INDEED, MALKIN NEVER QUITE BRINGS together the argument that for the decision-makers in Washington, D.C., military necessity, as inferred from sources known at the time, was the reason for the indiscriminate mass evacuation that actually occurred. During congressional testimony in 1984, to be sure, Colonel Bendetsen and Assistant Secretary McCloy recalled that MAGIC had influenced the removal decision over 40 years earlier, but the recollections of old men are suspect. Malkin simply does not examine in sufficient detail the shift in thinking during the key period of February 17-20, 1942, away from a more selective removal. And some evidence points elsewhere, away from military necessity. During this period, for example, Secretary Stimson had before him a letter from West Coast congressmen, one that FDR had forwarded to him on February 16 for a reply. The congressmen recommended evacuation of “all persons of Japanese lineage...from all

strategic areas.” They also called for enlarging the areas to “encompass the entire strategic area of the states of California, Oregon and Washington, and [the] Territory of Alaska.” To what extent did political considerations tip the decision? Malkin avoids such issues.

In the end, the removal took a particular course, one which swept up 112,000 people, many of them citizens, from a vast area. What does the experience teach post-9/11 America? Curiously, Malkin makes only a limited connection despite the implied linkage in the book’s title. (She devotes more attention to lambasting the critics of the relocation, who in the 1980s obtained an official apology from Congress as well as monetary compensation for surviving evacuees.) Although defending “racial profiling” in the aftermath of 9/11 on a variety of grounds, she does not use the World War II evacuation to argue for wholesale detention today.

What then is the moral for Malkin? This: don’t be misled by the pandering of “civil rights absolutists” intent on using “legends” about the World War II experience as “multicultural group therapy...to color and poison the current national security debate.” Are there specific lessons from the removal? Vigorously gather intelligence. Prevent people in suspect categories from holding sensitive civilian and military jobs. Avoid hard-to-win jury trials of subversives. Guard the secrets. As she recognizes, but without much recognition of the irony, the leading governmental opponents of mass relocation in 1942 said pretty much the same things.

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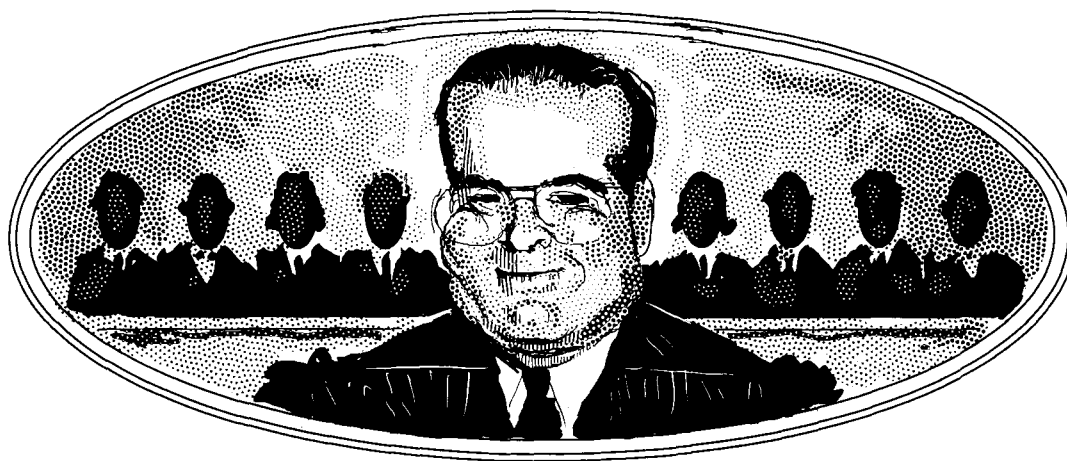


Book Review by Ralph A. Rossum

THE WIT AND WISDOM OF JUSTICE SCALIA

Scalia Dissents: Writings of the Supreme Court's Wittiest, Most Outspoken Justice,
edited by Kevin A. Ring. Regnery Publishing Inc., 256 pages, \$27.95

The Opinions of Justice Antonin Scalia: The Caustic Conservative,
edited by Paul I. Weizer. Peter Lang Publishing, 256 pages, \$25.95



WHEN CHIEF JUSTICE WILLIAM Rehnquist was diagnosed with anaplastic thyroid cancer late last October, speculation began to rage concerning who will succeed him upon his retirement. Justice Antonin Scalia has figured prominently in those speculations. He is mentioned as President Bush's likely nominee—if so, he would be the fourth Associate Justice in U.S. history to be elevated to Chief Justice—and the press has reported that Scalia is “running” for the job. Even if Bush fails to nominate Scalia, the thinking goes, he will certainly nominate someone like him. From the earliest days of the 2000 presidential campaign, after all, Bush declared his intention to appoint justices of Scalia's sort. Which invites the question: And what sort would that be?

In the words of Professor Jerry Goldman at Northwestern University, “On a bench lined with solemn gray figures who often sit as silently as pigeons on a railing, Scalia stands out like a talking parrot.” Scalia's opinions—whether Opinions of the Court, concurrences, or dissents—are more often included in the leading constitutional law casebooks, in both the law school and political science markets, than those of any other sitting justice. And his wonderfully crafted, often devastatingly witty opinions have also made him the subject of more academic inquiry and debate than any of his colleagues. According to Lexis-Nexis, Scalia's name appears in 45% of all law review articles that mention in their title a current Supreme Court justice.

During his 20 years on the High Bench, the

gregarious, poker-playing, opera-loving, former University of Chicago law professor has emerged as the Court's most outspoken, high-profile, and personally colorful member. He relishes the cut and thrust of debate, and has institutionalized the practice of hiring, and then carefully listening to, a “counter-clerk” with liberal views at odds with his own and those of his other three clerks. With a distinctive style of questioning that is by turns testy, confrontational, and provocative, he asks questions during oral argument that are demanding yet laced with impish humor. On one occasion, he told a flustered attorney frantically searching his brief for information, “Just shout ‘Bingo’ when you find it.” His opinions are carefully wrought, powerfully argued, and filled with well-turned phrases. Two examples may suffice here: “[N]o government official is ‘tempted’ to place restraints upon his own freedom of action, which is why Lord Acton did not say ‘Power tends to purify.’” And asking states that bar the death penalty about its constitutionality is “rather like including old-order Amishmen in a consumer-preference poll on the electric car. Of course they don't like it, but that sheds no light whatever on the point at issue.”

Two new books—Kevin A. Ring's *Scalia Dissents* and Paul I. Weizer's *The Opinions of Justice Antonin Scalia*—present Scalia's opinions to the general public. Each contains brief but intelligent introductory essays on Scalia's textualist approach to constitutional interpretation, followed by well-chosen samples of Scalia's clear, accessible opinions on a variety of topics—espe-

cially in the area of civil rights and liberties.

Both Ring and Weizer provide thoughtful overviews of Scalia's jurisprudence. Scalia argues that primacy must be accorded to the text, structure, and history of the document being interpreted and that the judge's job is to apply the Constitution's language or the structural principle necessarily implicit in the text. If the text is ambiguous, yielding several conflicting interpretations, Scalia turns to the specific legal tradition flowing from that text—to “what it meant to the society that adopted it” (this stance has opened him to charges of legal positivism and unqualified majoritarianism).

“TEXT AND TRADITION” IS A PHRASE that fills Justice Scalia's opinions. Judges are to be governed only by the “text and tradition of the Constitution,” not by their “intellectual, moral, and personal perceptions.” In his words, “[W]hen judges test their individual notions of ‘fairness’ against an American tradition that is deep and broad and continuing, it is not the tradition that is on trial, but the judges.” Thus for Scalia, reliance on text and tradition is a means of constraining judicial discretion. He believes that “the main danger in judicial interpretation of the Constitution—or, for that matter, in judicial interpretation of any law—is that the judges will mistake their own predilections for the law.”

Scalia holds that the Constitution creates two conflicting systems of rights. One is democratic—the right of the majority to rule individuals; the other is antidemocratic—the

right of individuals to have certain interests protected from majority rule. He relies on the Constitution's text to define the respective spheres of majority and minority freedom; and when that fails to provide definitive guidance, he turns to tradition to tell the Court when the majoritarian process is to be overruled in favor of individual rights. He thinks that by identifying those areas of life traditionally protected from majority rule, the Court can objectively determine which individual freedoms the Constitution protects. "I would separate the permissible from the impermissible on the basis of our Nation's traditions, which is what I believe sound constitutional adjudication requires."

Scalia therefore would overrule the majority only when it has infringed upon an individual right explicitly protected by the Constitution's text or by specific legal traditions emanating from it. In his 1996 dissent in *United States v. Virginia*, in which the Court proclaimed that the exclusively male admission policy of the Virginia Military Institute violated the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment, he declared that the function of the Court is to "preserve our society's values, not to revise them; to prevent backsliding from the degree of restriction the Constitution imposed upon democratic government, not to prescribe, on our own authority, progressively higher degrees." As he powerfully argued in his 1990 dissent in *Rutan v. Republican Party*, in which the Court held that political patronage violates the free-speech rights of public employees:

The provisions of the Bill of Rights were designed to restrain transient majorities from impairing long-recognized personal liberties. They did not create by implication novel individual rights overturning accepted political norms. Thus, when a practice not expressly prohibited by the text of the Bill of Rights bears the endorsement of a long tradition of open, widespread, and unchallenged use that dates back to the beginning of the Republic, we have no proper basis for striking it down. Such a venerable and accepted tradition is not to be laid on the examining table and scrutinized for its conformity to some abstract principle of First Amendment adjudication devised by this Court.... When it appears that the latest "rule," or "three-part test," or "balancing test" devised by the Court has placed us on a collision course with such a landmark practice, it is the former that must be recalculated by us, and not the latter that must be abandoned by our citizens.

FOLLOWING THEIR INTRODUCTORY ESsays, Ring and Weizer provide a rich array of Scalia's opinions in which his textualism is on full display. Ring, an attorney in private practice in the Washington, D.C., area and former counsel to the Subcommittee on the Constitution of the U.S. Senate's Judiciary Committee, focuses on Scalia in dissent. Although he admits that the title of his book is not "technically accurate" because he includes several of Scalia's concurrences as well, he defends *Scalia Dissents* as "fitting because nearly every opinion reveals Scalia in strong disagreement with the reasoning, if not the conclusion, of a majority of the Court." He provides 19 unedited dissenting and concurring opinions chosen "not necessarily" because they are "Scalia's most important" but because they "are the most interesting to read." Some are, in fact, among Scalia's most important, including his dissent in *Morrison v. Olson* (in which the Court upheld the constitutionality of the independent counsel statute against Scalia's powerful separation-of-powers argument—the only case in either volume in which Scalia addresses the text of the original Constitution itself as opposed to the Bill of Rights or the 14th Amendment). Ring also includes Scalia's valuable dissents in *Lee v. Weisman* (in which the Court held that a nondenominational prayer at a public school graduation violated the Establishment Clause), *McConnell v. Federal Election Commission* (the case upholding the McCain Feingold campaign finance reform), *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (the Court affirmed the constitutional right to abortion first announced in *Roe v. Wade*), and *Lawrence v. Texas* (in which the Court invalidated a Texas statute criminalizing homosexual sodomy).

Others are less important but just plain fun to read. For instance, Ring includes Scalia's dissent in *PGA v. Martin*, in which his colleagues concluded that the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) required that Casey Martin, a professional golfer suffering from a degenerative circulatory condition, be allowed, in violation of PGA rules, to use a motorized cart during tournaments. Scalia obviously enjoyed himself as he mocked the Court's work:

It has been rendered the solemn duty of the Supreme Court of the United States...to decide What Is Golf. I am sure that the Framers of the Constitution, aware of the 1457 edict of King James II of Scotland prohibiting golf because it interfered with the practice of archery, fully expected that sooner or later the paths of golf and government, the law and the links, would once again cross, and that the judges of this august Court would

some day have to wrestle with that age-old jurisprudential question, for which their years of study in the law have so well prepared them: Is someone riding around a golf course from shot to shot *really* a golfer? The answer, we learn, is yes. The Court ultimately concludes, and it will henceforth be the Law of the Land, that walking is not a "fundamental" aspect of golf.

Scalia had his doubts. He noted that "many, indeed, consider walking to be the *central feature* of the game of golf—hence Mark Twain's classic criticism of the sport: 'a good walk spoiled.'"

WEIZER'S SELECTION OF OPINIONS IS different from Ring's in two important respects. Weizer, an Associate Professor of Political Science at Fitchburg State College in Massachusetts, limits himself expressly to Scalia's opinions on civil rights and liberties, but he also includes several opinions in which Scalia wrote for the Court majority, including a Free Exercise case (*Employment Division, Oregon Department of Human Resources v. Smith*) and a Free Speech case (*R.A.V. v. City of St. Paul*). Weizer edits Scalia's opinions more heavily than Ring and thus is able to include 25 opinions in a shorter book. His selection overlaps substantially with Ring's (11 of the same opinions appear in both books); however, his interest in criminal procedure is apparent. He includes four important Scalia concurrences and dissents concerning the rights of the accused and four more on the meaning of "cruel and unusual punishments."

Since his appointment to the Supreme Court, Scalia has written over 600 opinions. Given so many from which to choose, Ring's and Weizer's selections are entirely defensible and, indeed, admirable. Still it is worth noting that by limiting himself to Scalia's dissents and concurrences, Ring has deprived his readers of Scalia's important opinions for the Court on judicial power, standing, federal pre-emption, and the Takings Clause, as well as Scalia's problematic opinions in the field of state sovereign immunity (e.g., his opinion in *Blatchford v. Native Village of Noatak* in which he expressed the decidedly antitextualist view that the 11th Amendment "stand[s] not so much for what it says, but for the presupposition...which it confirms"). Likewise, by including only Scalia's opinions on civil rights and liberties, Weizer has deprived his readers of Scalia's classic concurring or dissenting opinions on separation of powers, the "negative" Commerce Clause, and the war on terror, not to mention Scalia's questionable dissents

strictly limiting Congress's enforcement powers under Section 5 of the 14th Amendment (*Nevada Department of Human Resources v. Hibbs* and *Tennessee v. Lane*).

Such criticisms, however, are minor. These are two excellent introductions for the general public to the judicial philosophy of one of the Court's most talented—and certainly most vocal—jurists. Ring and Weizer concur in describing a justice who has remained faithful to the “text and tradition” of our written

Constitution; who has steadfastly rejected the idea of a “Living Constitution” and other novel theories of interpretation that have the invariable effect of transferring power from the popular branches to the judges; and who has sought to constrain judicial discretion and, with all the considerable intellectual tools at his disposal, has fought the tendency of judges to substitute their beliefs for society's. In so doing, he has reminded his colleagues and the public at large of the most important

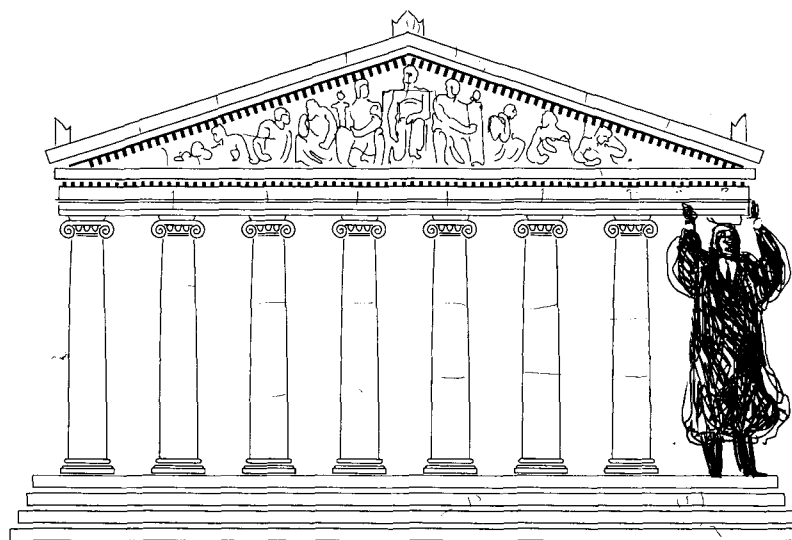
right of the people in a democracy—the right to govern themselves as they see fit and not to be overruled in their governance unless the clear text or traditional understanding of their Constitution demands it.

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Book Review by John C. Eastman

COLORBLIND JUSTICE

Judging Thomas: The Life and Times of Clarence Thomas, by Ken Fosskett.
HarperCollins Publishers, 352 pages, \$24.95 (cloth), \$14.95 (paper)



WE CAN LEARN MUCH FROM GOOD biographies, not just about the subject of the biography, but about the times in which he lived and, more broadly, about human nature itself. Ken Fosskett's biography of Justice Clarence Thomas is such a book, and we should learn from it: about the boy who grew up in rural, segregated Georgia to become a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; about the prominent African-American leaders who denigrate rather than praise his Horatio Alger story; and about the character of a great man in the face of unjust adversity. But we can also use the biography to move beyond Fosskett's own account of Thomas's judicial philosophy to the more nuanced jurisprudence actually embraced by Justice Thomas.

This is not the first biography of our nation's youngest justice, but the added distance from

the controversy over his nomination arguably makes it the most objective yet. And Fosskett, a journalist for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, draws some insightful connections between the Justice's character and the national struggle over race that has paralleled his life.

I have always been impressed, for example, by Justice Thomas's photographic memory and encyclopedic attention to detail. Fosskett connects this uncanny ability to our nation's racial past. As is widely known, Justice Thomas was raised by his grandfather, Myers Anderson, whose “almost fanatical devotion to work” gave him, writes Fosskett, a “sense of accomplishment and dignity as well as freedom” in a world that tried to deny those things to him. Yet Anderson was a product of Jim Crow, and never learned to read. Instead, he would memorize everything—truck and tractor repair instructions, construc-

tion techniques, and planting seasons—and he drilled the same attention to facts and details into his young charge.

Anderson also “had very little tolerance for troublemakers and individuals who did not want to work.” He succeeded in segregated Savannah even during the Great Depression. Fosskett recounts how Anderson instilled his self-reliant ethos in Thomas, but he also describes Thomas's more radical college days, when he flirted with the confrontational style that would eventually lead many latter-day civil rights leaders to demand government entitlements, up to and including reparations for slavery that ended five or six generations before they had been born. Thomas would ultimately follow his grandfather's path, and that of his grandfather's great-grandfather who, as a free-man in 1872, purchased the same 40 acres that

he had once farmed as a slave. Thomas adhered to that path even to the point of chastising—to a reporter!—a member of his own family for being on welfare. And portraits of Booker T. Washington and Frederick Douglass hang prominently in his chambers at the Court.

FOSKETT RECOUNTS HOW THOMAS'S LIFE experiences contributed to his political and judicial philosophy. Thomas and his grandfather, for example, grew crops on land Myers owned in Liberty County and gave the harvest to "po folk" who needed it, thus instilling in the young man an appreciation for private rather than governmental charity. Thomas's neighbors in those early days watched out for each other. If a man was sick, others tended his fields, and took in his children if he died. Any parent could discipline any child, and crime was almost non-existent as a result. These things, and his fundamental distrust of a government that embraced state-sponsored segregation, gave rise to Thomas's "libertarian" political philosophy, according to Foscett.

Yet his description of Thomas's libertarianism is too simplistic. As Foscett himself points out elsewhere, the sting of racial segregation that Thomas experienced was not of the white-versus-black variety codified in the law—Thomas had only limited interaction with whites until high school, where the nuns who taught him were white. Rather, he experienced an entirely different kind of racism, rooted in the elitism within the black community itself. Savannah, Georgia, of the 1950s and early 1960s had a brutal pecking order based on wealth and status, the latter often tied to skin color, with fair-skinned blacks at the top of the social ladder. Folks from Pin Point, like Thomas, were called "dem people" by black Savannah high society, and Thomas's nickname was "ABC," for "America's Blackest Child"—an odd nickname for someone who would later be called "the whitest man in America" by Columbia Professor Manning Marable, who despised Thomas's conservative judicial philosophy. Dark-skinned blacks weren't allowed into the better black social clubs, an oft-overlooked fact that extends back to the argument Homer Plessy made to the Supreme Court in 1896, when he contended that he should be admitted to the "white" train car because he was a fair-skinned black who could pass for white.

As a result of his experience, Thomas's political principles were not framed simply by an animus against a government that would permit (indeed, foster) segregation, but by his rejection of the inherent immorality of classifying people according to shades of color, whether done by government or by private groups. His

grandfather hung a framed picture of Martin Luther King, Jr., in his home because of King's appeal to a universal human dignity tied to the content of one's character rather than the color of one's skin—a principle that doubly resonated with young Thomas. While Foscett recognizes that "King's ideal formed the kernel of a color-blind worldview that Thomas embraced the rest of his life," his characterization of Thomas's "libertarian" philosophy does not do justice to Thomas's thought, which is grounded in a morality of self-evident truths and inalienable rights.

Foscett brushes by in a couple of pages a formative part of Thomas's story, for example, in which Thomas himself sought out Claremont Institute political scientists Ken Masugi and John Marini to help him with his inquiry into the natural-law principles of the American Founding. From the book's discussion of Thomas's concurring opinion in *Adarand v. Peña* (1995), Foscett omits the fact that Thomas cited the Declaration of Independence—something that the more libertarian, more positive-law oriented Scalia would never do. And he overlooks a major speech Thomas delivered in 1999 at the Claremont Institute's annual dinner commemorating Lincoln's birthday, in which the Justice defended the statesmanlike prudence of the founders and the government they crafted—a defense that is hard to square with what Foscett sees as Thomas's "libertarian antipathy to governmental power."

WHETHER FOSKETT INTENDED IT or not, his omissions shine light on a critical aspect of Justice Thomas's thought—the Justice's exploration of the natural-law underpinnings of American constitutionalism. And while Foscett denigrates these as mere "musings" that were a gold mine to his opponents in the pre-Anita Hill phase of his confirmation hearings, we should not, because they are critical to understanding Justice Thomas as he understands himself. After all, no one forced the then-Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to put political theorists on his staff to conduct seminars with him about the principles of the American Founding. Foscett recognizes that Chairman Thomas hired Masugi and Marini "to serve as his intellectual mentors, acting almost like graduate-school teaching assistants leading a philosophy seminar." He describes how the self-selected course of study led Thomas to a profound appreciation for the natural-law principles articulated in the Declaration of Independence and in Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," as well as the color-blind jurisprudence espoused most forcefully by the late 19th-century Supreme Court

Justice John Harlan in his famous dissent in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Yet Foscett fails to see how the principles Thomas embraced as a result of these studies are both deeper than and different from libertarianism.

UNFORTUNATELY, NO BIOGRAPHY OF Thomas would be complete without a recitation of the confirmation story that gripped the nation back in 1991. Foscett pays dutiful homage to the controversy, providing a matter-of-fact account that puts the whole controversy in a larger context. Two aspects of that context are crucial: first, Thomas's own character; and second, the all-out war that was waged against his confirmation. In context, the truth becomes relatively easy to sort out; without it, we are left with the strangest he-said/she-said dispute in American history.

For those who know him, Justice Thomas's character is impressive, and Foscett gives glimpses of it in vignettes throughout the book. We learn, for example, that Justice Thomas takes a close personal interest in his law clerks and their families. My children still fondly remember the candy jar in his chambers! We learn, too, that Thomas does not reserve his famous friendliness for society's elites. *Judging Thomas* recounts how he routinely takes time to acknowledge the efforts of those ordinary citizens with whom he comes into contact, proving through his own actions the truth of the Declaration's promise that all human beings are created equal. There is the story of the old janitor woman who gave him a big bear hug after he took the time to say hello, excusing himself from a group of judges to do so. There are the school groups—most often from poor, inner-city schools rather than the elite prep schools that dot the Washington, D.C., landscape—who regularly troop into the Supreme Court for private audiences with him. There is the story of the Charlottesville, Virginia, 5th-grader who challenged Justice Thomas to give up cigars in response to the Justice's challenge that the child trim back on television. And there is the heart-warming story of how Justice Thomas and his wife, Virginia, adopted his grandnephew, Mark, in order to give the boy "an opportunity to grow and learn" in the wake of his own father's imprisonment for selling crack cocaine.

One vignette is directly relevant to the incendiary allegations aired during Thomas's confirmation hearings. During his college days at Holy Cross, he insisted that his fellow Black Student Union members respect women, and control their language when women were present in the dorms, an aspect of Thomas's character that leads Foscett to conclude (correctly) that Anita Hill's allegations were "implausible" and "simply seemed unbelievable" to those who

knew Thomas, because bullying a woman is not in his nature.

The second context that Foscett emphasizes is the intense battle that was being waged against Thomas's confirmation by a broad coalition of pro-abortion groups, welfare lobbies, and civil rights organizations. The National Abortion Rights Action League opened its attacks—"drew first blood" is Foscett's phrase—the day after the nomination was announced, criticizing Thomas for praising an essay on the Declaration of Independence and the right to life as a splendid example of natural-law thinking.

BUT THE MOST TROUBLING OPPOSITION to Thomas's nomination came from the civil rights establishment. The board of the NAACP voted almost unanimously to oppose his nomination. The National Bar Association, the nation's largest organization of black lawyers, was more closely divided, but still voted to oppose. And the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, headed at the time by Ralph Neas, launched a grassroots political campaign against Thomas's confirmation. Rather than lauding the accomplishments of this self-made man, prominent African-American leaders viewed Thomas as a threat to their policy strategies. He had opposed segregated dorm floors while a student at Holy Cross, for example, contending that Black Student Union members should eat with white students if they ever wanted to break down old racial stereotypes. Thomas opposed affirmative action because he had experienced first-hand its stigmatizing effects, despite strenuous efforts to avoid being hired for a "civil rights" job, both in the private sector immediately after graduation from Yale Law School and in the jobs

he was offered in the Reagan Administration. It was this latter experience that would exacerbate Thomas's scorn for what he calls "The Presumption"—the implicit racism underlying affirmative action, which insists that blacks cannot make it without affirmative action's helping hand.

For his first decade on the Court, Thomas had to contend with "The Presumption." His judicial philosophy led him to vote quite often with Justice Scalia, for example, so word went out that he was just Scalia's clone, a charge that Foscett rightly describes as "patently absurd." It was also a charge tinged with the subtle racism that has marked attacks on Thomas throughout his entire career: no one ever accuses Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg of being the clone of Justice Stevens, even though she votes with him at least as frequently as Justice Thomas sides with Justice Scalia. Thomas would later famously refute this particular charge, angrily stating in a speech before the National Bar Association that "the stench of racial inferiority [implied by it] still confounds my olfactory nerves."

Such charges, the lingering effects of an anti-confirmation strategy designed deliberately and falsely to raise questions about the Justice's competence, have been disproved by his own body of work on the Court. Gradually, usually grudgingly, the academic scholarship is beginning to acknowledge this. Washington University Law Professor Richard Lazarus noted in 1995, for example, that the Justice's "work goes a long way to refuting the notion that this is someone who does not have the breadth to be a Supreme Court Justice." And noted Supreme Court historian Henry J. Abraham wrote in 1999 that "Thomas has re-

mained steadfast in his jurisprudence and has slowly gained the respect of sundry legal scholars for his written opinions."

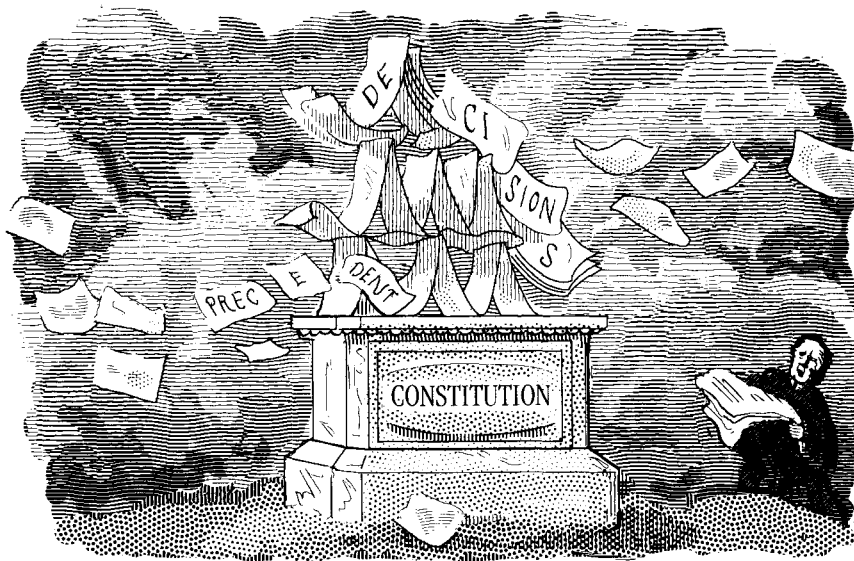
INDEED, IT IS BECOMING CLEAR THAT Thomas's own jurisprudential philosophy is more in line with the principles of our nation's founders, and hence with the Constitution they framed, than any other sitting Justice's is. And while the nation comes slowly to understand that, he will keep laying down markers, like so many bread crumbs, patiently pursuing his mission to help us all find the way back toward a constitutionalism grounded in the immutable truths of the Declaration of Independence. As the Justice himself noted in a 2002 speech at a resort on Amelia Island, Florida, a short distance but a world away from his birthplace in Pin Point, Georgia:

The longer I've had the obligation to interpret our Constitution and our laws, the more I believe in our system and in our government, the more I believe in our Constitution, the more I believe in our framers, the more faith I have in the amendments, and the more faith I have in our citizens. So, I'm probably reaching the point where I'm an apologist for the Court, for the Constitution, and for our country. And that's an odd thing for a young kid who grew up, up the road here, on Route 17, wondering where all those cars were going when they were headed south.

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ONE NATION UNDER GOD?

To the Flag: The Unlikely History of the Pledge of Allegiance, by Richard Ellis.
University Press of Kansas, 312 pages, \$29.95



PERHAPS THE MOST OVERLOOKED ASPECT of last year's Pledge of Allegiance case, *Elk Grove v. Newdow*, was the division it caused among three of the Supreme Court's more conservative judges. Chief Justice Rehnquist, Justice O'Connor, and Justice Thomas all voted to uphold "under God" (Justice Scalia recused himself), but they did so for strikingly different reasons. Justice Thomas, in fact, repudiated the rationale employed by the Chief Justice and altogether ignored Justice O'Connor's opinion (as did Rehnquist). Though these Court conservatives may be united against a rigid "wall of separation" between church and state, they are deeply divided over how to interpret the Establishment Clause. With a Court vacancy expected soon, the course of First Amendment jurisprudence concerning religion may be determined by the future of this disagreement.

Although not primarily concerned with the *Newdow* case, Richard Ellis's book, *To the Flag: The Unlikely History of the Pledge of Allegiance*, sheds some light on it, and in particular on Justice O'Connor's opinion. For more than a generation, the Court's Establishment Clause rulings have been a series of ever-changing doctrines or tests, each supposedly explicating the First Amendment's words but each identified, more tellingly, with its author's words in his or her controlling judicial opinion. In its much criticized 2002 decision, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals employed O'Connor's so-called "endorsement" test, first announced by her in 1984 in *Lynch v. Donnelly*, holding that the phrase "under God" unconstitutionally endorses monotheism. To void that result, O'Connor

devised a new four-part subtest to govern "ceremonial deism." Under her amended doctrine, actions like the Pledge pass constitutional muster if they: 1) are historical and ubiquitous, 2) are not worship or prayerful, 3) do not refer to a particular religion, and 4) involve minimal religious content.

O'Connor had to revise her approach if she wanted to uphold the Pledge because, as Ellis's history reveals, Congress clearly meant to endorse religion when it added the words "under God." Ellis, a professor of politics at Willamette University, traces the creation of the Pledge to Francis Bellamy, a Christian socialist who drafted a recitation for use in a nationwide 1892 Columbus Day celebration. Bellamy's original text—which read, "I pledge allegiance to my Flag and to the republic for which it stands—one Nation indivisible—with Liberty and Justice for all"—was revised in 1923 by a national flag conference. Congress then inserted "under God" in 1954 as part of an ongoing series of bipartisan steps intended, in Ellis's words, to "inject religious faith into public life." In 1952, Congress had mandated an annual National Day of Prayer. In 1955, Congress placed "In God We Trust" on paper money (it had been on coins since Lincoln's presidency). In 1956, the same words became the official national motto, replacing "E Pluribus Unum." None of these actions could have passed an honest application of O'Connor's original endorsement test.

Ellis explains that, with the emergence of the Soviet Union, Congress became concerned about the religious character of the American people. He reminds us that in the early years of the Cold War, many citizens saw Communism

as a potentially dangerous rival for the American people's affections. Congress sought to strengthen American patriotism by distinguishing our attachment to God from atheistic Communism's rejection of Him. In 1955 President Eisenhower perhaps most clearly expressed the spirit of the "under God" movement when he declared in a nationally broadcast address, "Without God there could be no American form of Government, nor an American way of life. Recognition of the Supreme Being is the first—the most basic—expression of Americanism."

IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE A STATEMENT THAT more flagrantly violates the spirit of Justice O'Connor's endorsement test; yet such expressions have always been part of American political rhetoric. Even Thomas Jefferson—who among the founders was perhaps the most skeptical of the salutary effects of religion—asked, "Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God?"

Notice that Jefferson's and Eisenhower's statements, like the phrase "under God" itself, contain a certain ambivalence. Recognition of God may be the most basic expression of Americanism because we believe America to be a part of God's providential order—we are "under God" in the sense that we are a chosen people. Alternatively, recognition of God might express our understanding that a higher law exists and that that law limits the scope and authority of our law—America is "under God" in the sense of being subject to His judgment. In this latter sense, recognition of God would

lead America, unlike the Soviet Union, say, to limit political power and to respect the rights with which human beings are endowed by their Creator. Consequently, governmental recognition and even endorsement of God do not necessarily enhance political power or lead to the union of church and state. As Tocqueville observed long ago, religion can increase democratic citizens' affection for their nation while also limiting their demands on it.

Unlike Tocqueville, Justice O'Connor seems only dimly aware that self-government requires self-governing individuals, and that religion and moral character have always, therefore, been legitimate objects of political concern. It is not illiberal and it should not be unconstitutional for the state to endorse, however mildly, those religions that nurture qualities of good citizenship.

PERHAPS BECAUSE O'CONNOR'S OPINION in the Pledge case was so obviously arbitrary and ad hoc, both Rehnquist and Thomas shunned it. The Chief Justice cited, instead, the "psychological coercion" doctrine. That standard, first articulated by Justice Kennedy in the graduation prayer case *Lee v. Weisman* (1992), holds that public schools cannot psychologically pressure school children to participate in religious exercises. Rehnquist determined that the phrase "under God" is in no sense a prayer. Including it in the Pledge, he wrote, does not convert the recital into a religious exercise and, accordingly, does not violate the psychological coercion test.

Justice Thomas disagreed. He argued that a straightforward application of the psychological coercion test would demand that "under God" be found unconstitutional. After all, if, as *Lee v. Weisman* held, high school students cannot be exposed to a single end-of-the-year non-denominational prayer, then they certainly cannot be led in a daily recital that affirms God's existence. Thomas proposed jettisoning Kennedy's framework and replacing it with Justice Scalia's "legal coercion" standard, which would prohibit the state from coercing religious belief or practice by force of law or threat of penalty—e.g., by suspending from school students who fail to recite the words "under God." More radically, Thomas argued that the original intent of the Establishment Clause was to prevent Congress from meddling with religion in the states; and thus the federal courts had no business parsing California's law concerning the Pledge of Allegiance to begin with.

Although they reached the same conclusion, Rehnquist and Thomas set forth two fundamentally different visions for the future of jurisprudence on the Establishment Clause. Rehnquist would have the Court operate within existing precedents; Thomas would overturn them.

NOW THE COURT HAS CHOSEN THE COURSE of the "psychological coercion" test. In *Simmons v. United States* (2002), the Chief Justice did not concur with a Cleveland program that allowed parents to use publicly funded tuition vouchers at private religious schools. Applying, in effect, the Court's religion decisions of the 1960s and '70s, he argued the program passed muster because it did not have the purpose or effect of advancing religion. Rehnquist employed O'Connor's endorsement test, too, contending that because the state did not discriminate on the basis of religion in distributing vouchers or dictating their use, a reasonable observer could not perceive state endorsement of religion over irreligion. Thomas voted with the Chief Justice in *Zelman*, but he directly questioned the propriety of evaluating state programs as Rehnquist did.

One could make reasonable arguments on behalf of either position. In one obvious respect, the Chief Justice's deference to precedent would seem to be more conservative, inasmuch as respecting prior decisions is a canon of traditional jurisprudence. *Stare decisis* generally promotes the predictable and consistent application of legal principles, encourages reliance on judicial decisions, and contributes to the actual and perceived integrity of the judicial process. If the Court does not respect its own precedents, it can hardly expect others to follow them. Not all precedents, alas, are equally worthy of respect. The problem of misguided precedents is particularly rampant in Establishment Clause jurisprudence, which seems to put a premium on unfair, unprincipled, and historically fictitious constructions of the text. Justice Thomas's call to overturn these bizarre decisions may seem "activist," but it is also, in a principled way, conservative. He would confess that the Court has erred and then return Establishment Clause jurisprudence to its constitutional foundations.

The argument for Rehnquist's approach is that it reflects the realities of the Court's current composition. For a decade, the Court has been mired in a 4-2-1-1-1 divide on establishment matters. Justices Stevens, Souter, Breyer, and Ginsburg embrace versions of the old "wall of separation" interpretation. They find suspect any form of government support for any kind of religion. Justices Scalia and Thomas favor a legal coercion standard. O'Connor uses her endorsement test; Kennedy, his psychological coercion framework. The Chief Justice's position fluctuates, but given that O'Connor and Kennedy are most likely to join the four strict-separationists, he tends to adopt one of their approaches in an attempt to assemble a five-member, moderately conservative majority. Such flexibility has allowed Rehnquist to deliver important victories, including one on school vouchers. Whatever the problems with O'Connor's and Kennedy's tests,

the Chief Justice has demonstrated that he can use them to reach desirable results.

But this strength comes with a troubling weakness. O'Connor's endorsement test and Kennedy's psychological coercion standard have forced Rehnquist to employ less-than-compelling legal arguments, which often deny religion's legitimate place in public discourse. To uphold the Pledge, for example, the Chief Justice had to all-but-read religion out of it. His opinion implicitly conceded that in the public square religion (in a prayerful sense) is constitutionally suspect. He also adopted the false dichotomy that something that is patriotic cannot be religious. The Pledge is patriotic *and* religious; the categories are not mutually exclusive. Rehnquist's opinion, furthermore, implied that there exists a clear and significant distinction between religious affirmations, like "under God," and religious exercises, like a non-denominational graduation prayer. Even if such a distinction does exist—and if it does, defining it would be more appropriate for scholastic theologians than judges—it is by no means clear why the state should be allowed to lead students to recite "under God" if it cannot ask them to stand for a non-denominational prayer. In short, the Chief Justice's reasoning was problematic, at best.

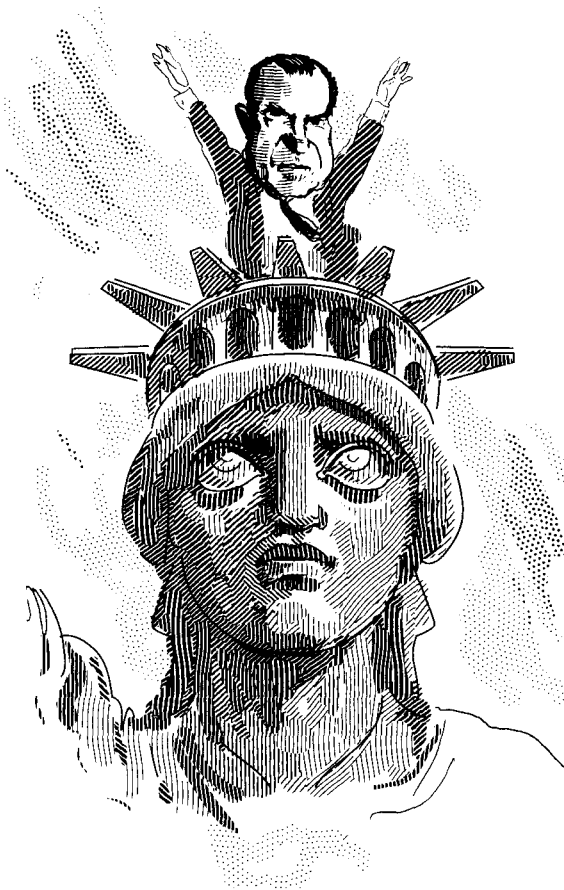
THE STRONGEST ARGUMENT SUPPORTING Thomas's call to overturn precedent may be that it would allow the Court to adopt a clear standard for what the Establishment Clause forbids. A jurisprudence that "respects" precedent by devising nuanced distinctions and exceptions in order to reach a desired result undermines the rule of law. Over time, it creates a body of decisions so complex and so multifaceted that, for all practical purposes, precedent ceases to exist and judges can use the past to construct whatever future they desire. For evidence of this, consider that Justice O'Connor's approach now permits legislation that, as Richard Ellis shows beyond any conceivable doubt, had the explicit purpose of publicly endorsing religion.

Much more so than Rehnquist, Justice Thomas is willing to clean up the Court's Establishment Clause mess. Although Thomas lacks the votes to elevate his criticism of the Court's church-state precedents into the Opinion of the Court, the Court's composition will likely change soon. Thomas then could be in a position to rewrite church-state jurisprudence by forging a lasting majority willing to make a clean break with Justice Kennedy's and Justice O'Connor's temporizing. Only then would the Establishment Clause start to look familiar to its authors and ratifiers.

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THE LONG DETOUR

Richard Nixon and the Quest for a New Majority, by Robert Mason.
University of North Carolina Press, 304 pages, \$39.95



IN 1964 THE AMERICAN CONSERVATIVE movement made its first bid for national political power, by seizing control of the Republican Party and nominating Senator Barry Goldwater as its candidate for president. The attempt failed disastrously: Goldwater carried only six states and won just 38% of the popular vote.

But far from disappearing, the conservative movement actually seemed strengthened by its defeat. It continued to grow, organizing the supporters who had cut their teeth in the Goldwater campaign, developing the issues that would make it more relevant in the years ahead, and grooming candidates and spokesmen who could carry its banner. Just four years later in 1968, it had a new national champion in the governor of the nation's largest state, who had been elected in 1966 by a margin of one million votes over the incumbent Democrat. If ever a new political movement seemed poised to take over the governance of America, it was conservatism in 1968.

Yet at just that moment, history paused in what seemed its inevitable course. The conservative movement would be compelled to spend 16 years, from 1964 to 1980, waiting in the wings

for its victory. The Republican Party would win (albeit narrowly) in 1968 to be sure, then overwhelmingly in 1972, only to witness in 1974 the first presidential resignation in American history, and then spend six years in the wilderness licking its wounds. The Democrats, despite the growing unpopularity of liberalism, managed to duck the bullets and continue to control both Houses of Congress and even, from 1976 to 1980, the White House. The whole political history of the United States seemed to hiccup and stall, while the country contended, for 16 precious years, with the phenomenon and consequences of one strange, stubborn, and ambiguous man: Richard Nixon.

Having served as Dwight Eisenhower's vice president for eight years, Nixon had a strong claim on his party's presidential nomination in 1960. Some early Goldwater supporters put their tiger's name before the convention, but the senator wisely withdrew it and urged conservatives to await a better day. New York governor Nelson Rockefeller, on behalf of the fading liberal wing of the party, made the first of what was to become a series of failed bids for the nomination. But the delegates were adamant: 1960 was Nixon's year.

Or would have been, had the American people not preferred John Kennedy by a narrow margin. What then was left for Richard Nixon? He ran for the governorship of California in 1962, but was defeated by Democrat Pat Brown. At that point he seems to have concluded that his political career was over. Snarling to the press that "You won't have Nixon to kick around any more," he abandoned California for New York, accepted a lucrative partnership in a posh Wall Street law firm, and told a friend as they strolled up Park Avenue, "This is where the action is—not back in California with those peasants." (Nixon had always harbored a conviction that the real power in America resided in certain key corporate boardrooms and the locker rooms of the "right" golf clubs—perhaps a vestige of the inferiority he had felt as a minor California political figure when Tom Dewey, Henry Luce, and other New Yorkers ran the Republican show.)

American history would have been spared a great many tragic missteps if Richard Nixon had adhered to his resolve to turn his back on politics and live the good life in New York. It seems likely that Ronald Reagan would have won the 1968 nomination (at the age of 57) and

the presidency that fall. With the conservative movement in full and early blossom, there would have been a far different, and far better, outcome in Vietnam. There would have been no Watergate, and no presidential resignation under threat of impeachment. In all likelihood, the elder Bush or someone like him, serving as Reagan's vice president and heir, would have succeeded to the presidency in 1976.

But once the presidential bug has bitten a man, he is infected for life. (Thus John Kerry gazes admiringly in a mirror and dreams of 2008.) Richard Nixon was fascinated by Barry Goldwater's capture of the nomination, and by his subsequent overwhelming defeat. He was sure that he could do better—and he meant to try.

THIS IS THE POINT AT WHICH ROBERT Mason, a lecturer in history at the University of Edinburgh, picks up the story. *Richard Nixon and the Quest for a New Majority* is a detailed and workmanlike study of how Nixon approached the problem of winning the presidency in 1968 and again in 1972. It also spells out the plans he had for subsequent victories by his surrogates (notably John Connally), had not Watergate and its sequelae ruined them.

One might suppose that Nixon, surveying the field about 1966, would have realized that the conservative movement, which had lost with Goldwater and not yet attached itself to Reagan, lay ready to hand. One might imagine that the Nixon of 1966 would have heard and thought enough about the conservative movement to recognize, and perhaps even admire and identify himself with, the sheer power of its ideas.

But apparently Goldwater's massive defeat blinded Nixon to the important strengths of the conservative movement. He recognized the attraction it held for many people, but regarded it as a problem for the Republican Party, rather than a solution.

In an early and revealing comment that Mason curiously omits to quote, Nixon told a group of reporters in early October 1965 that "the Buckleyites" were "a threat to the Republican Party even more menacing than the Birchers." That was the report of columnists Evans and Novak in an October 14th column, and it was confirmed a few days later by Scripps-Howard by-liner Bruce Bioassat, who stated that Nixon had been "emphatic...in chats with newsmen" that Buckleyites were "the worst threat to the Party's difficult rebuilding efforts."

Presumably it was Pat Buchanan (whom Nixon had already hired full-time as his contact with the right wing) who explained to Nixon that his statement had been a blunder. But it

took repeated demands for an explanation from various "Buckleyites" (including myself), and an editorial in *National Review* itself, to elicit almost six months later the following convoluted climb-down from Buchanan to *National Review*: What Nixon had "invariably" asserted was only that, in Buckley's 1965 race for the mayoralty of New York City, "Mr. Buckley, by his repudiation of the [John] Birch Society in his magazine and syndicated column, had thereby made himself a much stronger candidate and a greater threat to the Republican candidate, Representative [John] Lindsay."

The episode seems to have taught Nixon the danger of antagonizing the conservative movement. But it does not seem to have occurred to him to make common cause with it, let alone harness his presidential ambitions to it. Instead, in the run-up to the Republican convention of 1968, Mason describes Nixon as formulating his own recipe for a political realignment that would return the GOP to power: To the "base of traditional Republicans, who emphasized the importance of free enterprise," he would add "sections of the population whose needs and expectations differed superficially from the Republican core of support, such as 'new liberals,' who emphasized participatory democracy; the 'new South,' interested in 'interpreting the old doctrine of states' rights in new ways'; most surprisingly, black militants, rejecting welfarism in favor of self-help; plus the 'silent center.'"

The result was that Nixon came within a whisker of losing the 1968 nomination to Reagan, who having encountered no serious competition from Nixon, emerged as the conservative movement's champion.

Reagan's bid for the 1968 nomination is widely forgotten these days—not least, because like most politicians, Reagan didn't enjoy recalling his defeats and in later years minimized the whole affair. But the fact is that he allowed his agents to test the waters thoroughly as early as the fall of 1967, formally declared his candidacy when his plane landed in Miami for the convention, and worked hard for the nomination. Three British reporters who covered the contest and wrote a book about it afterward (*An American Melodrama: The Presidential Campaign of 1968*) rightly observed that Nixon's margin over Reagan was "almost insultingly small." Nixon prevailed only because conservatives, who controlled the convention as thoroughly as they had controlled its predecessor in 1964, were split. Many, including some who had prematurely committed themselves to Nixon, were in their hearts for Reagan. But a decisive minority of conservatives, led by Senator Strom Thurmond (who in turn had been heavily influenced by his former colleague Barry Goldwater) argued that Reagan, who had only served two years as gov-

ernor, was too green politically, and that Nixon was conservative "enough." To this misguided belief were owed 12 years of misery for the conservative movement—and for the nation.

ONCE ELECTED, NIXON PUT HIS DREAM of fashioning a new political majority in the hands of three close aides: H. R. Haldeman, John Ehrlichman, and Charles Colson. There were other, more conservative advisers—notably speechwriter Pat Buchanan—but these three were dominant, and they shared Nixon's disdain for the burgeoning conservative movement, preferring to put together a coalition that would be anti-liberal, but more ambiguous and (they hoped) more attractive than out-and-out conservatism.

In doing so, they noted but rejected the counsel of Kevin Phillips, a brilliant political analyst who was a special assistant to Attorney General Mitchell. Phillips's book, *The Emerging Republican Majority*, was published in 1969. Nixon's thoroughly "moderate" speechwriter William Safire warned Ehrlichman that it was "most dangerous." On the contrary, it was the most profound and accurate analysis of American politics to appear in decades, and correctly predicted, and explained, the upsurge in Republican fortunes that began in 1968 and has continued almost uninterruptedly ever since. In subsequent years Phillips has published a series of progressively less perceptive books, denouncing what he considers the direction of the Republican Party and laying special blame at the door of the Bush "dynasty." But in *The Emerging Republican Majority*, he made a major and permanent contribution to the field of political science.

Unfortunately its significance was lost on the Nixon high command. Too many people denounced its message that the Republican Party could and should capture the South and the Southwest, wrongly believing that Phillips favored wooing racists, when in fact he merely recognized the enormous change being brought about by young couples from the North flooding into the growing cities of the Sunbelt. Phillips's book was read (though they denied it) by everybody from Nixon down; but it was treated as just another piece of debatable advice.

Instead, "[a]t the start of 1970, Nixon fully believed," asserts Mason, "in his ability to use the silent majority as the foundation of a new majority coalition." That ambiguous phrase—"a new majority"—was capable of being used, and revised, and re-revised, to represent any cocktail of issues and interests that seemed transiently attractive. Mason diligently reports them all.

In the spring of 1970, for example, a crowd of construction workers marching on Wall Street to protest the antics of anti-war activ-

ists signaled to the White House the possibility of winning previously unheard-of support from blue-collar workers. Nixon "soon thereafter invited a group of construction workers to the White House," and toyed with the idea of changing the name of the Republican Party to "the Conservative Party."

By September, with the Congressional elections less than two months away, Nixon was ordering his staff to "emphasize anti-crime, anti-demonstrations, anti-drugs, anti-obscenity." But the 1970 election returns were disappointing. There was a gain of just two Republican senators, whereas Nixon had hoped for "at least several more." In the House, the Republicans suffered a net loss of nine. Worst of all, in 45 states holding gubernatorial elections, Republicans lost control in 11, giving them 21 to the Democrats' 29.

So then it was on to the presidential election of 1972. Even now, Nixon kept his distance from the conservative movement. Mason explains why:

Despite the birth of a modern movement of conservative thought in the 1950s and its growth in the 1960s, conservative ideas remained relatively marginal to intellectual and wider public debate. Moreover, many members of this conservative movement were not unequivocally pledged to the cause of the new majority. Their approach to politics often emphasized an anticommunist foreign policy and a laissez-faire domestic policy. Nixon shared neither guiding principle, so his relationship with movement conservatives was at best uneasy.

One wonders what the conservatives who preferred Nixon in the late 1960s and early 1970s, reading that passage today, will think of their indulgence toward him.

CERTAINLY SOME CONSERVATIVES, EVEN at the time, felt acutely uneasy. In July 1971 Nixon announced his intention to visit Beijing in 1972, a move clearly designed to pave the way to formal diplomatic recognition. And on August 15th he imposed wage and price controls, a policy anathema to every economic conservative. As a result, in the summer of 1971 a group of conservatives that became known as the Manhattan Twelve announced their tentative decision to support a more conservative candidate against Nixon in 1972. This group (of which I was a member) was broadly representative of the major organizations in the conservative movement—*National Review*, *Human Events*, the American Conservative Union, Young Americans for Freedom, and so

on—but did not represent a serious political threat to Nixon, in part because their own determination to oppose him was, in several cases, distinctly half-hearted. Nevertheless, most of them endorsed Congressman John Ashbrook of Ohio for the nomination against Nixon, and supported him doggedly through the New Hampshire primary. When Nixon returned from his visit to Beijing in February 1972, Bill Buckley (one of 80 journalists who had accompanied him) wrote bluntly: "We have lost—irretrievably—any sense of moral mission in the world." But it hardly mattered; Nixon won the Republican primaries overwhelmingly.

Meanwhile, he kept adding ingredients to his New Majority cocktail. Sensing broad public sympathy for Lt. William Calley, who had been convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison for his role in the massacre of 300 Vietnamese civilians at My Lai, Nixon identified himself with the cause of reducing the sentence. Ultimately Calley spent less than four years under house arrest before obtaining parole. Union leaders, in particular, were delighted.

Desegregation, too, attracted Nixon's attention and his cautious opposition. He openly declared his opposition to forced busing and "residential desegregation" (building public housing in ethnic neighborhoods). Nor were Catholic voters overlooked: Despite the reservations of his staff, Nixon supported public financial aid to private (and therefore to parochial) schools.

Mason is rightly unimpressed with these efforts. "Against a strong opponent, [they] might not even have been enough to win reelection for Nixon." But the Democrats, incredibly, nominated George McGovern, a candidate on the far left of American opinion.

Mason's description of Nixon's campaign is almost chilling. "[Nixon's] strategy depended on the rejection of concern for the Republican Party at large." His vehicle was not the party but the Committee for the Reelection of the President (CRP, forgivably bastardized as CREEP). He calculated that after the election would be the moment to launch, as the vehicle for his New Majority, a new conservative party, with Texas Democrat John Connally at its head.

As the campaign of 1972 began, Nixon spoke of "character," and praised the "moral and spiritual strength" of the American people. They were, he declared, "united in their continued belief in honest hard work, love of country, spiritual faith." Slowly the voters began to develop deep reservations about McGovern. Nor did it hurt that there seemed to be fresh progress in peace negotiations with North Vietnam. The "one overriding issue," Nixon told voters, was "the issue of peace—peace in Vietnam, and peace in the world at large for a generation to come."

When the smoke cleared on election night, Richard Nixon had received the greatest presidential plurality in American history, and carried every state but Massachusetts. The Republican Party had much less to brag about: Ticket-splitters had actually caused it to suffer a net loss of two senators and one governor, and a gain of only 13 seats in the House. But to Nixon the victory confirmed his strategy. He claimed in his memoirs that it was "truly a New Majority landslide of the kind I had called for in my acceptance speech in August."

WHAT RICHARD NIXON MIGHT have done with his vaunted New Majority if all had gone well is fodder for endless speculation. Would it have absorbed and superseded the growing conservative movement, or swiftly evanesced? We will never know, because all did not go well. Within three months of Nixon's second inauguration, the Watergate scandal overwhelmed the White House. In August 1974, facing certain impeachment, Nixon became the first and only president to resign from office. Ironically, in the nearly two decades of life that remained to him, he devoted himself to rehabilitating his own image without the slightest reference to, or any further support for, his concept of a New Majority. Instead, he carefully cultivated his reputation as a master of foreign policy among the very liberals he had once so cordially detested.

Meanwhile, what of the conservative movement he had contemptuously disdained? It had supported him for election in 1968, despite the disappointment many conservatives felt at Reagan's narrow defeat for the nomination. It supported him again for reelection in 1972, with a few exceptions and a good many reservations. But the very fact that Nixon so zealously excluded leaders of the conservative movement from major appointments in his administration (Bill Buckley, for example, was named merely a member of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations) meant that they were virtually immune to collateral injury when the administration's collapse finally came.

INSTEAD, THE CONSERVATIVE MOVEMENT spent the Nixon years building its strength quite independently. The names and addresses of the many thousands of people who had made small financial contributions to the Goldwater campaign were painstakingly copied, computerized, and made available to subsequent conservative campaigns. Paul Weyrich established the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress to facilitate his involvement in Congressional primaries and elections in both parties. John T. ("Terry") Dolan created

the National Conservative Political Action Committee to raise conservative campaign funds and spend them where they would do the most good. Jay Parker founded the Lincoln Institute for Research and Education to work directly on issues affecting his fellow blacks. Phyllis Schlafly launched her war against the Equal Rights Amendment, winning in 1978 a victory that will always be associated with her name. Consumer affairs were the field of Consumer Alert, the brainchild of a remarkable Vietnam War widow named Barbara Keating. Medical topics were the province of a panel of distinguished medical scientists assembled by Dr. Elizabeth Whelan's American Council on Science and Health. Issues related to defense were the focus of John Fisher's American Security Council, and global strategic concerns were the specialty of Frank Barnett's National Strategy Information Center.

On the college front, the Intercollegiate Studies Institute had been founded in the early 1950s, and Young Americans for Freedom had been on the scene since 1960. They were now joined by Irving Kristol's Institute for Educational Affairs, which specialized in encouraging conservative college journals. The early 1970s also saw the founding of the American Legislative Exchange Council, which soon boasted a membership of 2,000 state legislators. In the same period a number of "public service legal foundations" were launched, to litigate conservative causes in the nation's courts.

Perhaps most important of all was the

founding of the Heritage Foundation in 1973 by Paul Weyrich, Joseph Coors, and Edwin Feulner. This provided the conservative movement with an aggressive and competent "think tank" to furnish conservative political leaders and spokesmen with policy guidance and technical backup facilities. Within 10 years it had an annual budget of \$9.5 million.

Thus did the American conservative movement expand and arm itself for battle in the very years when Richard Nixon was concocting his New Majority. As we have seen, he disdained the movement, and gradually those conservatives who had once given him their support came to disdain him. By 1974, when he resigned the presidency, the divorce was complete. Gerald Ford, whom Nixon had appointed vice president when Spiro Agnew resigned, ratified it (if that was necessary) when he assumed the presidency on Nixon's resignation and promptly appointed Nelson Rockefeller as vice president. This move—putting the leader of the rapidly vanishing liberal wing of the Republican Party within a heartbeat of the presidency, thereby mortally affronting the conservatives—is surely in the running for the stupidest blunder ever committed by an American president. There was no way the Republican convention of 1976 could be bludgeoned into nominating Rockefeller for vice president, and Rockefeller himself practically admitted as much when he took himself out of the running.

The conservatives were by now solidly behind Ronald Reagan, and with their support

he won the nomination in 1980 and went on to trounce Jimmy Carter that November. Four years later he was reelected, carrying every state but Minnesota.

It would be interesting to know Richard Nixon's inmost thoughts as he watched Reagan assume the leadership of the powerful movement he himself had so cavalierly disregarded, win election and reelection, and become one of the greatest presidents of the 20th century. There had been a time when Nixon himself might have seized the leadership of that movement, and in consonance with its principles contributed to American history the high and honorable legacy we now rightly associate with Ronald Reagan.

But Richard Nixon was at heart a Machiavellian, which is to say that he believed that the fundamental truths of politics were not about principles, but about power. His "quest for a New Majority" was simply an attempt to assemble a coalition of interests muscular enough to take over the country. When a concept like freedom crossed his mind, it was only as an ideal that he realized some people prized enough to die for. Of politics as he understood it, he was a master. But he never comprehended the richness of its potential as a vehicle for the principles that can alone conduce to the happiness of mankind.

William A. Rusher, a distinguished fellow of the Claremont Institute, was publisher of National Review from 1957 to 1989.

PRELUDE TO GREATNESS

Reagan's Revolution: The Untold Story of the Campaign that Started It All, by Craig Shirley.
Nelson Current, 448 pages, \$25.99



A HANDFUL OF PRESIDENTS FACED tough challenges for renomination in the 20th century. Twice, challengers drove their presidential opponents (Harry S. Truman and Lyndon B. Johnson) from the race altogether. Three times, the race that resulted was an epic struggle that rent the president's party and deeply affected American politics. In one, Theodore Roosevelt stormed out of retirement and took the fight to his erstwhile friend, incumbent William Howard Taft. In another, Senator Edward Kennedy, Camelot's remaining heir, waged a long and bitter struggle against Jimmy Carter.

Conservative political consultant Craig Shirley examines the remaining, and perhaps the most important, case: Ronald Reagan's 1976 challenge to (unelected) incumbent Gerald R. Ford. Shirley argues that the 1976 Reagan campaign, which is often given short shrift even by Reagan enthusiasts, laid the groundwork for 1980. In Shirley's view, "1976 joined 1856, 1860, and 1964 as the most important Republican conventions in the party's history, and one of the most important in American history."

In 1976, Reagan pushed Ford to the limit. He won more caucus state delegates, and more votes in primaries than Ford. He lost the nomination by the barest of margins—1,187 delegates to 1,070—because a number of states had large blocks of uncommitted delegates under the control of pro-Ford party leaders. As Shirley argues, the nationwide Reagan organization, "Citizens for Reagan," served as the foundation

for Reagan's activity for the next four years. His near-win against an incumbent gave him greater stature both within the party and beyond, turning him into the GOP front-runner in 1980. By appealing to conservatives in both parties (and repelling liberal Republicans), Reagan advanced the process of the parties' ideological sorting-out. And Reagan's impromptu but eloquent remarks at the national convention captured the party's heart. As Reagan's close friend, Nevada Senator Paul Laxalt argued, "Though we lost we really won."

All in all, Shirley's work has much to commend it. His book should be read by anyone interested in Reagan, the rise of conservatism in the Republican Party, or American politics in the mid-1970s. And although not his main focus, Shirley also offers many interesting insights into a presidential nomination process that has since faded into history.

His account is filled with meticulous detail grounded in dozens of interviews with participants in the 1976 race. He makes clear, for example, the importance for Reagan's future of Vice President Spiro Agnew's resignation in 1973. Agnew's fall not only propelled Ford into the vice presidency and then the presidency, but removed Agnew himself as the presumptive front-runner for the 1976 GOP nomination. Similarly, Shirley examines Ford's numerous slights to Reagan, the deal hatched between Reagan's campaign manager John Sears and Ford's Rogers Morton that froze Ford's attacks on Reagan in the days leading up to the challenger's crucial North Carolina

primary win, and more generally the effect of human contingency on the course of history. (He even points out that the Watergate scandal was made possible because the uniformed policeman normally on the beat was drunk that night and unable to respond to the burglary call. In his place, three plainclothes officers were sent in an unmarked car, and the burglars' "spotter" was unable to send a warning.)

REAGAN'S REVOLUTION PAINTS COMPLEX portraits of key figures in the contest. Reagan himself is shown to be mostly the same in private as he was in public, full of grace and good humor (though some around Reagan have disputed Shirley's account of a few moments of great anger). On the Ford side, characters like Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld loom large, not unlike today. John Sears is presented as both brilliant and flawed, a spendthrift who never fully appreciated Reagan's capacities, who made some important mistakes along the way, but who was also instrumental in persuading Reagan to run and in keeping the campaign alive at crucial moments. Richard Schweiker, the Pennsylvania Senator named by Reagan as his running mate in an unprecedented move weeks before the convention, is portrayed in a generally favorable light. While he was attacked by many conservatives as a liberal, Shirley contends: "he was from a heavily unionized state, and if his pro-union votes were removed from his record, Schweiker was fairly conservative. Schweiker was not a



movement conservative. Still, he was solid on anti-Communism, solid on national defense, solid on the Second Amendment, anti-abortion, opposed to forced busing, and a leader in the Captive Nations issue." The appraisals of Sears and Schweiker will undoubtedly strike some conservatives from that era as overly generous, but Shirley's argument is reasoned.

Readers also meet the man who comes closest to being the villain of this story, Clarke Reed. Reed was the chairman of the Mississippi Republican Party, a Goldwater veteran who may have been more responsible than any other individual for making the GOP a viable institution in Mississippi. Having privately pledged his support to Reagan, Reed betrayed the Californian at the last minute. Mississippi's reversal ended whatever hope Reagan may have had at the convention. Even here, Shirley treats his subject with some sympathy, though he makes no effort to exonerate or excuse Reed, who is shown as weak and pathetic rather than malicious. The sorry episode is but one historical example of many in which a great man is laid low by the egotism and petty intrigues of a much smaller man.

Reagan's Revolution clearly demonstrates the central importance of foreign policy to the Reagan cause. It was only when Reagan turned to foreign policy—attacking détente, the Panama Canal negotiations, and the stewardship of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger—that he revived his flagging campaign in North Carolina and Texas. He capitalized on his North Carolina win by buying time for a 30 minute speech on foreign policy that was watched by 20% of American households and brought in \$1.5 million dollars for the campaign.

FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN THE PROCESSES of American presidential nominations, Shirley provides strong evidence that many of the reforms of the early 1970s were counter-productive. Those reforms were driven by a desire to make the parties more open to outsiders like Eugene McCarthy and George McGovern (and, presumably, Reagan). But Shirley explains how the campaign finance reforms of 1974 actually hurt Reagan. The Federal Election Commission, under the control of Ford appointees, took its time releasing the matching funds owed to Reagan at several key junctures. After the Supreme Court forced Congress to rewrite the legislation, Ford let the

bill sit on his desk as long as possible, preventing the FEC from dispersing *any* funds. It should not have been difficult to predict that when government is given power over campaigns, those in government will use that power to harm their opponents. Yet somehow the lesson never seems to sink in. At the same time, Reagan may have been hurt by the post-1968 shift from caucuses to primaries. His strategists believed, probably correctly, that he could not have gotten off the ground without primaries. But in the end—like Goldwater in 1964—Reagan did better in caucus states, where money counts for less and organization counts for more.

Nevertheless, the reform process was not complete. The convention still mattered, and there were still large blocs of uncommitted delegates who could be swayed by state and local party leaders, making the 1976 presidential nominating system closer to the 1968 system than to today's. Indeed, 1976 was the last convention that opened with no candidate claiming the allegiance of a majority of delegates.

REAGAN'S REVOLUTION HAS A FEW shortcomings. At times, for instance, it seems to contradict itself. Shirley describes Ford's public standing as plummeting in late 1975; in another place, he gives poll results showing Ford leading Reagan and all Democrats in late 1975. Conservative congressman John Ashbrook is once described as having "stood by Reagan" in the anti-Schweiker backlash; three pages later Ashbrook describes himself as "a former supporter" of Reagan, due to the Schweiker decision. More generally, Shirley does not come down clearly on how much (or if) the Schweiker decision really hurt Reagan in the waning weeks of the contest, nor on how much (or if) his famous proposal for a \$90 billion devolution of federal social programs to the states really hurt Reagan in New Hampshire. Perhaps it is impossible to render a definitive judgment on those questions, but Shirley simply offers conflicting information and leaves it to the reader to sort out.

He also occasionally indulges in questionable assertions, usually by taking a perfectly valid point and extending it too far. For example, the Republican Party is presented in 1974-75 as being in its "death throes." Sure enough, Watergate and the 1974-75 recession had inflicted serious damage on the party, but Democrats were having plenty of problems too,

despite their superficial strength in voter identification. In retrospect, the New Deal coalition broke apart in 1968 and was never really put back together. The South was unreliable, blue-collar workers were divided, and Catholics had voted for Nixon in 1972. Even the hapless Gerald Ford (as Shirley presents him) almost won against Jimmy Carter in 1976 at the nadir of Republican strength. And as Shirley himself points out, conservatives had been gaining strength in the GOP since 1964. Nevertheless, his general point is right: Without Reagan, the GOP would have been far less successful over the next quarter-century, and it would not have changed America and the world.

STILL, THE BOOK OVERREACHES WHEN it claims: "It is unconscionable to think that any modern Republican would aggressively or gleefully embrace the growth of government or oppose the decentralization of power in Washington." One is left to wonder where that leaves the No Child Left Behind Act and the prescription drug entitlement. Indeed, one of the open questions facing Republicans today is whether Reaganism will be the guiding philosophy of their party or a mere password, a cover for the return of domestic Nixonism.

It is impossible to know how history might have been different if Reagan had won the 1976 Republican nomination. As Shirley points out, the Reagan of 1976, though impressive, was not the fully formed Reagan of 1980. He had not yet adopted "supply-side" economics and had not fully incorporated the growing movement of social conservatives into his coalition. It may also have taken the disasters of the Carter years to finally prepare Americans to accept enough of the conservative critique to make possible a successful Reagan candidacy and presidency. But it is easier to estimate what would have happened had Reagan not run in 1976, or had run and been driven from the race after a few primaries. He would either not have run in 1980 at all (as Shirley thinks), or have started the 1980 campaign from a much weaker position. The world would be a very different place, and not for the better.

Andrew E. Busch is professor of government at Claremont McKenna College, and author of Ronald Reagan and the Politics of Freedom (Rowman & Littlefield).

Essay by Michael M. Uhlmann

THE RIGHT STUFF

William F. Buckley, Jr. and the American Conservative Movement



CAN IT BE THAT NATIONAL REVIEW, flagship of the modern conservative movement, is turning 50 years old? And can it be that William F. Buckley, eminence of both magazine and movement, will soon celebrate his 80th birthday? To conservatives who came of age along with *National Review*, both facts must seem highly improbable. It was only yesterday, after all, that Chairman Bill gaveled the ragtag national conservative meeting to order and urged it (as *National Review's* inaugural issue had famously instructed) to "stand athwart history, yelling Stop."

"Stand Athwart History!" was certainly a bracing imperative for a new political movement, but what exactly did it mean? Buckley and his colleagues did not arrive on the scene with a prefabricated platform, but in due course a conservative program of sorts began to emerge in the pages of their magazine. A more vigorous foreign policy came first in the order of battle. The Eisenhower Administration could hardly be accused of being "soft" on Communism, but it exhibited an almost preternatural fear about discussing foreign policy outside the realist vocabulary of the containment doctrine. To the editors of *National Review*, however, containment was a tactic, not a strategy. What was needed was a specifically moral understanding of the protracted struggle with Communism. Without it, a policy of containment would become a recipe for drift and, ultimately, defeat.

Domestic policy was discussed in only slightly less moral terms. While the urgencies of foreign policy took precedence, the preservation of freedom at home was no less important than the defense against Communist aggression abroad. Left to its own devices, liberalism would by gradual degrees lead America to

increasing collectivization of its economic and social life. The Eisenhower Administration seemed to think that a pale Republican version of the New Deal was indispensable to electoral success. Here, no less than in foreign policy, Eisenhower Republicanism was hopelessly adrift. To the editors of *National Review* nothing was inevitable about the growth of the administrative state.

A third programmatic goal transcended the immediate importance of any foreign or domestic initiative. Buckley and his colleagues believed that all enduring political revolutions had been mounted on the backs of ideas. The prevailing ethos of the day, repeated endlessly in liberal journals of opinion, held that conservatism had no ideas worthy of serious consideration by the thinking class. From its very first issue, *National Review* undertook to prove why the charge was false; it undertook, in short, to show that conservatism was intellectually respectable.

There was, finally, a point of the utmost practical importance. Spurred by its publisher, William A. Rusher, *National Review* soon thrust itself into the struggle to define the future of the Republican Party. The logic here was simplicity itself: Speculation about public policy was interesting and necessary, but unless conservatives acquired the means to translate their ideas into practice, all would be for naught. The strategic imperative: Seize control of the Republican Party.

Such were the major goals of the new conservative movement launched by the founding of *National Review*. Its subsequent success, which within 20 years had moved the center of American politics noticeably to the right, tends to obscure the audacious, some might say quixotic, character of the original program.

The cultural and political milieu of the 1950s, after all, offered little evidence to sustain the hope that an explicitly conservative movement was necessary, desirable, or even possible. Did anyone besides the Buckleyites seriously believe that socialism would come creeping in on the little cat feet of Eisenhower Republicanism? Undaunted, the new conservatives responded with the cheerful determination of The Little Engine That Could. If the body politic was ignorant of or indifferent to threats deemed palpably dangerous by the editors of *National Review*, it would simply have to be instructed.

Perpetual Motion

HALF-A-CENTURY ON, THREE PARTS OF the original four-part platform have been substantially accomplished (rolling back the Soviet Union, capturing the Republican Party, making conservative ideas respectable). As to the fourth, despite the revolution in economic thought initiated by the Chicago School and other free-market votaries, restraining the appetite of the administrative state has proved, so far, beyond human ingenuity—even for conservative Republicans. Still, considering the immensity of what was accomplished and the improbability of its occurrence, the success of modern conservatism is nothing short of remarkable. And much of its success would have been unthinkable without the inspiration, verve, and genius of Bill Buckley.

He would be the first to say that he had a lot of help from his friends—not least a long-time *National Review* subscriber by the name of Ronald Reagan, who gave conservatism a sunny face and a record of measurable political accomplishment. True enough, but a case can

be made that without Buckley, there would have been no Reagan. Indeed, Buckley would have been a noteworthy figure even if Reagan had never come on the scene. God graced him with an angel's wit, a zest for life, and an extraordinary capacity for hard work. He has deployed these talents—and others as well—over the past half century in ways that would have depleted the energies of the next three prodigies you'd care to name. *National Review* wasn't simply the conservative magazine of record; it was the *omnium gatherum* for a major political movement that Buckley created more or less *ex nihilo* and thereafter guided like a (mostly) benign monarch.

Buckley practically invented a new style of political combat, in which he was both observer and participant, bringing to both roles beguiling elegance. His writing was marked by a distinctive, even daring mannerism quite unlike any before seen. It was at times unduly Latinate and, as Bill taught us all to say, sesquipedalian, but it was unique and uniquely his own. In less competent hands, such a style might have been reduced to mere eccentricity, but in Buckley's, the result was captivating, at once vigorous and playful, always exhibiting a fine ear for the music of language. These distinctive marks have been sustained over five decades in a body of work astonishing no less for its size than for its grace. A 275-page bibliography, covering his works through 2000, noted 35 volumes of non-fiction (of which about 10 are collections), 15 novels, some 1,500 articles, reviews, and editorials in *National Review* and other magazines, and more than 4,000 newspaper columns. Hillsdale College is assembling Buckley Online, a searchable archive of his publications, at www.hillsdale.edu/buckley. Neither the bibliography nor the website includes Buckley's voluminous correspondence, which will one day prove to be a treasure trove for historians and biographers. Yale's Sterling Library is said to have some 1,000 boxes of Buckleyana already on file.

Until he began to wind it down in the 1990s, the Buckley perpetual motion machine was for the better part of 50 years an object of popular acclaim on the national speakers' circuit. In as many as 70 appearances a year (often in debate) before audiences large and small, young and old, Preacher Buckley spread the conservative gospel across the land. For 34 of those years, he also hosted a weekly television talk show, *Firing Line*, the longest-running (and easily the most thoughtful) example of its genre. He is, in addition, a passable harpsichord recitalist (he has performed nine concerts with symphony orchestras), as well as an intrepid ocean mariner. And did I mention that Buckley also ran for mayor of New York City in 1965, receiving 13% of the vote in what many regard as the most entertaining political campaign of modern times?

Buckley has slowed his pace in recent years and begun to prepare for what his epilogue to *Miles Gone By* calls a "final passage." In 1990 he surrendered day-to-day supervision of *National Review's* editorial activities. He has given up the lecture circuit and now makes only occasional public appearances. He has captained his last ocean voyage, cut his syndicated column to twice a week (after 35 years at three times a week), and signed off on his last *Firing Line* broadcast.

Books by William F. Buckley, Jr. mentioned in this essay:

The Unmaking of a Mayor.
Viking, 341 pages, 1966

Nearer, My God: An Autobiography of Faith.
Doubleday, 336 pages, 1997

*The Redhunter: A Novel Based
on the Life of Senator Joe McCarthy.*
Little, Brown, & Co., 432 pages, 1999

*Let Us Talk of Many Things:
The Collected Speeches.*
Crown Publishing, 544 pages, 2000

The Fall of the Berlin Wall.
John Wiley & Sons, 212 pages, 2004

Miles Gone By: A Literary Autobiography.
Regnery Publishing, Inc., 592 pages, 2004

Last Call for Blackford Oakes.
Harcourt, 378 pages, 2005



Guides to WFB's writings:

William F. Buckley, Jr.: A Bibliography,
edited by William F. Meehan, III.
ISI Books, 275 pages, 2002

www.hillsdale.edu/buckley

Buckley's letting go would for most mortals constitute a rather full, not to say hectic life. Since he began to slack off in 1990, he has published nine novels, edited three anthologies, written a superb account of the last days of the Cold War (*The Fall of the Berlin Wall*), and offered considered reflections on his religious convictions (*Nearer, My God*). Among the recent novels are a more or less true-to-life account (*The Redhunter*) of his association with Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, in which Buckley

provides his final (and substantially revised) assessment of the man whose name has become an "era"; and the newly published last installment of his Blackford Oakes spy series (*Last Call for Blackford Oakes*). Of the anthologies, the most interesting by far is *Let Us Talk of Many Things: The Collected Speeches*, which provides a revealing portrait, sketched over a half century, of Buckley at work in the public arena.

Someone desiring to grasp the essence of the Buckley persona might do well to begin with the speeches, which present him as the world has seen him, and proceed from there to *Nearer, My God* and *Miles Gone By* to glimpse those features of his life for which he would perhaps most like to be remembered.

Words and Deeds

MILES GONE BY, SUBTITLED "A Literary Autobiography," is a collection of 63 pieces written by Buckley during and about different phases of his remarkable career. (As an added inducement, the volume comes with an accompanying CD on which you can savor Buckley reading excerpts from his excerpts. The CD is so good that it is a shame he did not record the whole book.) In contrast to his previous collections, which drew heavily on Buckley's public policy commentaries, the present volume attempts what he describes as "a narrative survey of my life, at work and play." The public persona is present (how could it not be?), but the emphasis here is distinctly personal. There are warm recollections of his remarkable parents and upbringing, his formal education at home, in England, and at Yale; assorted *billets doux* to wine, the glories and complexities of the English language, skiing, and (at some length) sailing; sketches on travel, public speaking, playing Bach on the harpsichord, and going down to see the *Titanic*; reflections on social mores, thoughts on his pilgrimage to Lourdes, and detailed recollections of two interesting political encounters (running for mayor of New York in 1965, debating Governor Ronald Reagan about the Panama Canal in 1978).

Also included are the author's reflections on 20 friends and colleagues. If everything else were excluded from the book, these alone would make it a treasure. No one in our time has written more perceptively, or more affectingly, about friends and friendship, an undertaking that tells you as much about Buckley as it does about his subjects. The pieces vary in length, from shorter portraits that capture in a mere 750-1,000 words some compelling feature of the person being observed, to longer pointillist sketches that reveal facets of character in the manner of a precious stone being turned beneath a jeweler's eye. Some critics have faulted Buckley over the years for being a serial name-dropper of world-class proportions.

That he certainly is, but how many people do you suppose can claim simultaneous close acquaintance with David Niven, Ronald Reagan, Henry Kissinger, Clare Boothe Luce, Tom Wolfe, Vladimir Horowitz, Roger Moore, Alistair Cooke, Princess Grace, John Kenneth Galbraith, William Shawn, and Whittaker Chambers (to name only a dozen whose lives are limned in the present volume)?

The writing in *Miles* is as varied as the author's personality—alternately somber and light, sometimes rhapsodic (never more so than when he dilates upon sailing, about which he has written as beautifully as anyone in our or any other time), sometimes sparse, but invariably witty, lively, and engaging. The overall affect is one of warmth and cheerful vivacity, like the man himself. Even for one who has read most of the pieces before, revisiting them is an amiable undertaking, like sitting down with an old friend one has not seen in many years and picking up where the conversation left off.

Inevitably, any collection of this sort is bound to dissatisfy someone. An anthology, after all, is only an anthology. It cannot, no matter how well woven, tell a complete tale, and as "a literary autobiography" made up of previously published pieces, it intentionally eschews sustained personal reflection. To the disappointment of his friends and admirers, Buckley decided some time ago not to try his hand at a straight autobiography. "I do resist

introspection," he once wrote, "though I cannot claim to have 'guarded' against it, because even to say that would suppose that the temptation to do so was there, which it isn't."

He is probably the shrewdest judge of himself in this respect. So much of Buckley's life—at least that part he would wish to have on public view—has been lived in the arena and has already been chronicled by him in millions of words. What more, this dashing man of action must have reflected, what more can I say? Autobiography requires not only a certain kind of introspection that, rightly or wrongly, Buckley believes he lacks, but a certain kind of ego that, one suspects, he greatly disdains. Many years ago, when reviewing the memoirs of some self-important figure, Buckley dryly observed that the work fell into a literary category that might be labeled, "Waters I Have Walked On."

Even putting ego to one side, not all great writers possess the special art necessary to the execution of a memorable autobiography. There may be no great loss in that. What might William Shakespeare tell us about himself half so interesting as his plays or poetry? The same question might be asked of Abraham Lincoln, whose speeches tell us, in a sense, most of what we need to know. Thomas Jefferson's *Autobiography* scarcely bears that description, whereas his other writings give a rather full view of the man. In fact, one can count the great presidential autobiographies on

one finger (Ulysses S. Grant's, which some say shows the hand of Mark Twain). Even saints fall short of the mark, unless they happen to be Augustine, or perhaps Teresa of Lisieux, whose *Story of a Soul* hardly fits the definition of autobiography at all. The lesson seems to be that saints, like politicians, are better judged by deeds than words. In the case of writers, their words *are* their deeds, and a sizable literary corpus will often reveal more than conscious efforts at self-analysis would. So, however deprived some may feel, Bill Buckley may be forgiven for sparing us detailed introspections of his own life. Beyond what he has already provided us, heavier lifting will have to await the labors of a thoughtful biographer.

A Magazine and a Movement

IN THE MEANTIME, A PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT of this remarkable man might best begin by returning to those thrilling days of yesteryear, when the conservative cause enjoyed neither the comfort of intellectual respectability nor the experience of political success. In its early years especially (ca. 1955-60), *National Review* performed multiple functions at once: It created a forum in which conservative ideas were treated seriously; it acted as an information clearinghouse for conservative activists; and (not least) it created a magnetic field that gradually drew into its orbit an astonishing array of intellectual diversity. Contrary to the restrictive paradigms

MAKE THE PLEDGE

Our country is at war, and at the heart of a successful war effort must be the political conviction that this country is worth fighting and dying for. This conviction is repugnant to America's cultural, intellectual, and academic establishments, which have (with great success) taught a generation of Americans that "one man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist." American citizens need to understand what it is that America stands for, what it is about America that deserves what Lincoln called at Gettysburg "the last full measure of devotion."

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established by fashionable academic opinion, modern conservatism tends to defeat neat doctrinal definition. *National Review* understood and acted upon that fact from its inception. Then as now, five different kinds of libertarians warred with five different kinds of traditionalists, debating everything from theology and epistemology to whether Richard Nixon was or wasn't a "true" conservative. However else they differed, they agreed that they were not liberals. Beyond that, two things held the nascent movement together: the compelling persona of Bill Buckley and the exigencies of the anti-Communist cause.

In the early days, when the tribe was small, everyone knew pretty much everyone else. In 1960, Frank Chodorov, the gentle and generous libertarian who helped to start *National Review*, walked into a relatively modest gathering of the clan in New York, looked around, and declared, "My God, if the Commies only knew, they could rub out the entire conservative movement." Even a modestly alert undergraduate who worked *National Review's* precincts could get to know most of the magazine's writers and editors, who were wonderfully generous with their time. That included the editor-in-chief, who was conscious of having founded a movement no less than a magazine. Indeed, at the beginning cause and leader were inextricably fused. When factional warfare threatened to break out (which was almost always the case) Buckley held things together through frequent applications of his copious charm. He didn't always succeed, but he was without question The Man.

As to the cause itself, *National Review* provided its readers with a continuing stream of evidence, not otherwise easily available, on the aggressive motives and tactics of Soviet foreign policy. Readers also learned that the Cold War could not be properly understood without addressing its moral dimension. The indispensable guide on that point, the *Ur-text* as it were, was *Witness*, the compelling testament of Whittaker Chambers, whom Buckley induced for a time to serve as a contributing editor. By attending carefully to that great book and the controversy that caused it to be written, one could discover the fatal fault lines of the contemporary liberal establishment. Even more, perhaps, than Chambers himself, Buckley drew the lesson in stark relief: An establishment that could not bring itself to acknowledge the moral fault and legal guilt of Alger Hiss was an establishment that could not be counted on to stand up against Soviet imperialism when the crunch came. The permutations of that proposition, which worked themselves out in a hundred implicit and explicit ways in *National Review's* editorial policy, became the magazine's *raison d'être*. If membership in the conservative cause had been determined by an entrance exam, the leading question would have been where one stood on the Hiss case. On this, as on many other

matters, philosophical understanding preceded and defined the order of battle.

When it came to battle, Buckley was conservatism's Henry at Agincourt, instructing and inspiring through noble speech and leading by courageous example. He seemed to be everywhere on the battlefield at once, directing a charge over here, retrieving the wounded over there, always ready to engage in hand-to-hand combat whenever necessary. He was not conservatism's only hero, but he was certainly its most conspicuous warrior, one who seemed equally at home in philosophical disputation and in political infighting. As the case required, his rhetoric might be high-toned, sardonic, combative, or lyrical, but in any of its carefully orchestrated modes it was not only unique but uniquely enticing. For those even slightly oriented toward a conservative disposition, it was utterly intoxicating.

In the Arena

TURN THE CLOCK BACK, IF YOU WILL, TO September 1960. President Eisenhower, nearing the end of his tenure, had invited Nikita Khrushchev to the United States. Why the Russian premier should have been invited for an extended state visit at that particular moment, and precisely how relations between the U.S. and the USSR would be improved thereby, were questions that our government had failed to address to the satisfaction of *National Review's* editors. Premier Khrushchev began his American trip with a stop at the United Nations in New York City, which accorded him the sort of hospitality normally reserved for benevolent monarchs or elected leaders of allied states. The attendant obsequies dismayed Buckley and his colleagues, confirming their conviction that the regnant suppositions of the foreign policy establishment, Republican and Democratic alike, were fatally flawed. The invitation betrayed weakness—a foolish diplomatic gesture designed by and for State Department bureaucrats, pleasing to the editorial palate of the *New York Times* and other centers of fashionable opinion, but in the end sure to earn only dangerous contempt on the part of the Soviets.

It simply would not do to have the butcher of Budapest honored like benign royalty—not when millions of slaves behind the Iron Curtain looked to the United States for inspiration and succor. Accordingly, from Buckley's command center at *National Review*, the orders went out. These included organizing a massive rally at Carnegie Hall, where eleven speakers inveighed against Khrushchev, the Soviet Union, American pusillanimity, the editorial policy of the *New York Times*, and a variety of related lesser evils all of which were thoroughly familiar to regular readers of *National Review*. The hall was packed to the rafters, the air electrical-

ly charged with conservative fervor. The speakers proceeded one by one to ring the changes, building toward what everyone knew would be the evening's crowning glory, the peroration by Chairman Bill.

He did not disappoint. His speech, even after 45 years, retains an extraordinary capacity to move. If you want a window on the soul of the burgeoning conservative movement, and on the soul of its founding father, you cannot do better than to consult it. (It may be found in *Let Us Talk of Many Things*.) Buckley opened by leading the audience through every implausible reason why Khrushchev should be treated like an honored guest. As one lame rationale after another was demolished with devastating logic and acidic humor ("What reason have we to believe that a man who knows Russia and still has not rejected Marx will be moved by the sight of Levittown?"), Buckley built to his major point: that Eisenhower's "diplomatic sentimentality... can only confirm Khrushchev in the contempt he feels for the dissipated morale of a nation far gone, as the theorists of Marxism have all along contended, in decrepitude."

That he should achieve orthodox diplomatic recognition not four years after shocking history itself by the brutalities of Budapest; months after the shooting down of an unarmed American plane; only weeks since he last shrieked his intention of demolishing the West; only days since publishing in an American magazine his undiluted resolve to enslave the citizens of free Berlin—that such an introduction should end up constituting his credentials for a visit to America will teach him something about the West that some of us wish he might never have known.

....Will he not return to Moscow convinced that behind the modulated hubbub at the White House, in the State Department, in the city halls, in the country clubs, at the economic clubs, at the industrial banquets, he heard—with his own ears—the death rattle of the West?

The major foreign policy point having been established, Buckley then turned to humor, finding his target of opportunity in the hapless Robert Wagner, Jr., mayor of New York. Noting that the mayor had warmly greeted Khrushchev that very afternoon, Buckley expressed puzzlement. Only a year before, after all, Mayor Wagner had ostentatiously refused to greet King Ibn Saud, because Ibn Saud discriminated against Jews in Saudi Arabia, and no one, by God, who discriminates against Jews is going shake the hand of Bob Wagner, mayor of New York. There was a little problem with

the mayor's formulation, however, as Buckley now proceeded to point out:

Now, as everybody knows, what Nikita Khrushchev does to Jews is kill them. On the other hand, he does much the same thing to Catholics and Protestants. Could *that* be why Mr. Wagner consented to honor Khrushchev? Khrushchev murders people without regard to race, color, or creed, and therefore whatever he is guilty of, he is not guilty of discrimination?

It was a classic piece of mordant Buckley wit, which he had spent much of the 1950s honing against the complacent shibboleths of liberalism. The audience loved it and hooted its approbation till the rafters shook.

Following this brief excursus into comic relief, Buckley returned to the sobriety of the early part of the speech. Having twisted the dagger into the conventional hypocrisies of poor Bob Wagner, who was after all only a bit player in Bill's larger moral drama, Buckley now turned, well, priestly:

Ladies and Gentlemen, we deem it the central revelation of Western experience that man cannot ineradicably stain himself, for the wells of regeneration are infinitely deep. No temple has ever been so profaned that it cannot be purified; no man is ever truly lost; no nation is irrevocably dishonored. Khrushchev cannot take permanent advantage of our temporary disadvantage, for it is the West he is fighting. And in the West there lie, however encysted, the ultimate resources, which are moral in nature. Khrushchev is *not* aware that the gates of hell shall not prevail against us. Even out of the depths of despair, we take heart in the knowledge that it cannot matter how deep we fall, for there is always hope. In the end, we will bury him.

If you unstitch the speech, especially its concluding paragraph, and follow the resultant threads to their original premises, you will in due course understand the animating moral fervor of conservative Cold War policy. If you leap ahead 20 years, what you will find is Ronald Reagan talking about the Evil Empire and telling Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall. The speech also shows Buckley at the height of his rhetorical powers. All of the trademark attributes of the inimitable Buckley style are there—the slashing wit, the artful skewering of

pretentious liberal propositions, the call to arms, the metaphysical connection of political action to higher purposes, the musical cadence of the sentences, and (if you happened to be there) the perfectly polished delivery. For conservatives, there was no one to match their darlin' Bill.

Conservatively Speaking

TO THEIR DISMAY, LIBERALS WOULD spend much of the '60s discovering the same thing. Skip ahead five years to 1965, when Buckley entered the New York City mayor's race on the Conservative Party ticket. He had no expectation of winning, but even in losing believed he might demonstrate the incompetence of liberal urban policy and, as well, the relevance of conservative principles. The Democratic nominee was the colorless Abraham Beame, a decent man utterly in thrall to his party's power brokers. The Golden Boy of the race was the congressman from Manhattan's so-called "silk-stocking" district, John Lindsay, who had received the endorsement of the Republicans and the Liberal Party. Lindsay's supporters believed that the genteel Yale-educated lawyer was destined to become the Republican Party's JFK. The idea seemed to be that Lindsay, having made New York City a showcase for liberal social policies, would launch himself onto the national stage and into the race for the Republican presidential nomination.

To conservatives, New York City was already dying from an overdose of liberal pieties. It was time, perhaps, for some truth-telling about what ailed the City. The opportunity proved irresistible to Buckley, who took to the challenge with undisguised glee. In the event, he received 13% of the vote, demonstrating in the process that John Lindsay was, as an *Esquire* magazine profile had put it, "less than meets the eye." The Conservative candidate had a rollicking good time playing Lindsay off against Beame, Beame off against Lindsay, and both off against the hypocrisies of urban politics, which precluded Beame and Lindsay from saying anything serious about the city's real problems. Buckley has left us a wonderful account, at once droll and serious, of that campaign in *The Unmaking of a Mayor*, which may justly take its place among his best books. In a better universe, it would be required reading in a course on the decline of American cities. (A generous excerpt from his account is included in *Miles*.)

Buckley announced his candidacy with a characteristically elegant statement of high conservative principle, which he proceeded to read, with the signature Buckley mannerisms, to a jumble of hard-nosed New York reporters.

A stenographer who had been hired to log the event later complained that his writing hand ached for two days: "I never heard anything like it before. The syllabic content was tremendous." The sainted Murray Kempton, the most gifted stylist in American journalism, found (as he so often did) the *mots justes*: Watching Buckley, he said, reminded him of nothing so much as "an Edwardian resident commissioner reading the Anglican Articles to a captive assemblage of Zulus." Only Kempton, it may be safely said, could have written that, and only about Buckley. The ensuing Q-and-A featured such gems as the following:

Q: Do you think you have any chance of winning?

A: No.

Q: How many votes do you expect to get, conservatively speaking?

A: Conservatively speaking, one.

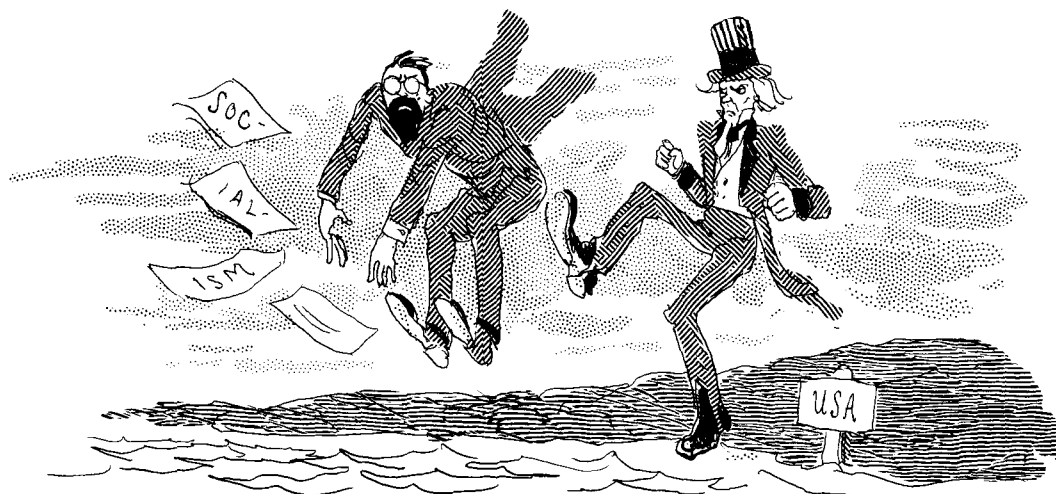
Buckley's impishness on that occasion, in the debates, and in other press conferences was irresistible, even to hardened reporters who had grown old listening to the bromides routinely dished up by urban politicians. And it was especially enchanting for young conservatives, who knew that Buckley's good-natured humor was but his entrée to the salient point: that our cities were being governed by mountebanks and fools who indulged in endless cant at the expense of thoughtful policy. Lindsay won, but his victory only served to prove that the emperor wasn't wearing any clothes. With each year of his increasingly ineffectual administration New York sank deeper and deeper into a fiscal and bureaucratic morass that entangles it even now. Lindsay's national ambitions sank along with the city.

The S.S. Buckley sailed merrily on to other ports of call but not without leaving an important legacy. Buckley's candidacy had helped to make the Conservative Party a permanent fixture of state politics, powerful enough, for example, to elect his brother Jim as U.S. Senator from New York in 1970. The wise men of the eastern GOP establishment, for their part, continued their search for a liberal Republican JFK. Little did they realize that the party machinery was now already in the hands of conservatives, where it has remained ever since. Even less could they imagine that when the Republican JFK finally appeared, his name would be Ronald Reagan. In no small part, we have Bill Buckley to thank for that too, but that's another story.

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EXCEPTIONALLY CONSERVATIVE

The Right Nation: Conservative Power in America, by John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge.
The Penguin Press, 400 pages, \$25.95 (cloth), \$16 (paper)



IS CONSERVATISM COMPATIBLE WITH capitalism? Theorists such as Joseph Schumpeter thought (as did Marx) that the central process of capitalism was “creative destruction.” Too much destruction, and there isn’t much left to conserve. The conclusion would have to be that capitalism drives out conservatism, but for the last half century, America has been developing a dramatic refutation of this abstract thesis.

It is a development that would have astonished students of American culture in the middle of the 20th century. In those days, Louis Hartz declared that America was a liberal society lacking both conservatism and socialism because it had no aristocracy to sustain conservatives, and no real working class to play the role of a Marxist proletariat. Political scientists regarded American political parties as relatively loose alliances of political convenience, substituting rhetorical flourishes for ideological conviction. Democrats were constrained by Southern conservatives, and Republicans had “Rockefeller Republicans” to demonstrate that they weren’t just a gang of plutocrats. The result was that up until the 1960s, anything recognizable as “conservative” in the United States exhibited either eccentric Tory nostalgia or took the form of a few rather paranoid fringe groups who might make the odd splash (like McCarthyism) until the basic liberal common sense of the American tradition slapped them down.

Yet in the last half century, America has undergone a regime change that is analyzed in *The Right Nation: Conservative Power in America* by John Micklethwait and Adrian

Wooldridge, two British journalists working for *The Economist*. Like all political movements, conservative America needs a legend about its origins, and the authors have given a splendidly lively account of it. The legend begins with disaster, in the form of “the conservative rout” from 1952 to 1964, culminating in the disastrous presidential bid made by Barry Goldwater in 1964. Similar genesis accounts can be found in related political movements—that of the Mount Pelerin Society, for example, which begins with F.A. Hayek calling together a saving remnant of free-market liberals in 1947, or Margaret Thatcher’s conversion to the free market and her involvement with the London Institute of Economic Affairs after 1976. Few things are more inspiring than triumph arising from times of pure despair.

It is no small part of the flavor of these stories that the triumphs they celebrate confounded a complacent mistake among their opponents, namely, that the world was moving inexorably towards a sane and moral consensus that would leave the anachronism of conservatism behind. As Micklethwait and Wooldridge tell us, Columbia University’s famous Richard Hofstadter, who had written about the “paranoid style” of politics in America, was reduced to rhetorical spluttering by the Goldwater candidacy: “When, in all our history, has anyone with ideas so bizarre, so archaic, so self-confounding, so remote from the basic American consensus, ever got so far?” Many American coastal dwellers still feel pretty much the same way (as do the vast majority of Europeans), and they focus their antipathy on George W. Bush.

The authors have a terrific story to tell, and they tell it with immense verve and wit. This is journalism with pace, covering a lot of Tocquevillian territory, even if it is Tocqueville lite. I can forgive anything in a book so sensitive to the witty froth of politics, and I don’t think that heavy lashings of empirical political science would have added a great deal to our understanding. Two points seem to me worth looking at in a little detail. The first is to ask what we might mean by calling the diverse political enthusiasms that have transformed American life “conservative,” and the second is to observe how much this book reveals to a British reader about the way in which America has become a civilization fundamentally distinct from its European roots.

THE VERY TERM “CONSERVATISM” HAS a timid sound about it, as Hayek once argued in explaining why he rejected it. Few countries outside Britain and Canada have parties proclaiming themselves “conservative” and the American triumph, of course, flew the flag of the Republican Party. It is odd, however, that a name so redolent of passive obedience to the past should have become so explicitly the dominant doctrine of such a dynamic capitalism as that of the United States. The basic point, no doubt, is that countries with conservative regimes are in fact more enterprising and dynamic than countries that make a fuss about their revolutionary credentials, just as any country that has the word “democratic” in its title can be confidently marked down as a corrupt autocracy. The conservative British

at the end of the 18th century were creating a whole new industrial civilization at a time when the revolutionaries in France were merely churning society and succumbing to military adventurism. So there is no problem about associating conservatism with dynamism, but the name itself remains odd.

The explanation might be found in the other "dimensional" term in the title of the book: the "right" nation. To be "right-wing" is to be identified by contrast with "the Left," but it is a feature of the rhetoric of our time that "the Right" suffers the ambiguity of being associated both with libertarianism and the free market on the one hand, and with fascist movements on the other. Again, of course, the reality belies this popular but muddled judgment: collectivist movements such as Nazism (which explicitly pronounced itself a form of socialism) are essentially left-wing adventures in managerialism. Yet in much of liberal America, "right-wing" is associated with brutal indifference to human suffering. This was the point George W. Bush was repudiating in proclaiming himself a "compassionate conservative."

There was thus in the mood music of the conservative movement an element of defiance, of cutting against the grain, of reclaiming a besmirched vocabulary from undeserved disdain. What could better tweak the noses of the pompous Left than setting up branches of the Second Amendment Sisters (in favor of guns) at women's colleges, or protesting to the university authorities that left-wing professors were cancelling classes to go on anti-war protests? In modern culture, a posture of oppositionality is an affectation even of the most established elites, and the conservatives did not hesitate to exploit it. They had to face down most of the media. They had to face down the universities dominated by complacent progressives. And they had to face down Hollywood. But they had in their favor the one move that in America can be a decisive trump: patriotism. Conservatives were not only happy in their skins; they were happy in their country. They were able to strike out at a kind of false consciousness. "It is not possible to have a debate, a discussion with someone who at their root...hates everything this country stands for" as one enthusiast put it, "but doesn't hate it enough to leave." Many liberals were thus hoist by the old embarrassment that Communists and champagne socialists could never avoid: hypocrisy.

The "right nation" came to dominate the United States from a remarkable confluence of different movements and enthusiasms: evangelical Christians exercised by the abortion issue, libertarian exponents of tax-cutting, intellectuals disillusioned with Marxism (and some influenced by Leo Strauss and Ayn Rand), Southern

conservatives dedicated to states rights, and a miscellany of people alienated by the wilder shores of 1960s' liberation movements. All very difficult to hold together, and nearly all of it couched in the idiom of revivalism.

IT IS UNIMAGINABLY DISTANT FROM THE conservative temperament advanced by such thinkers as Edmund Burke, which is in fact one essential component of political wisdom in any regime. Conservatism as a political attitude only makes sense as distinguished from the only other two genuinely political doctrines: liberalism, which insists on the primacy of freedom in modern states, and socialism, which revolves around the needs and interests of (in various senses of the word) "the poor." Classical liberalism has, since John Stuart Mill, split between libertarians and American liberals, who think freedom can only be enjoyed if the state provides the supposed necessities for "self-realization." Conservatism is the belief that the current organization of society, its customs and established interests, is the best clue to political reality, and that this living form of life should be disturbed by abstract ideals only in the most exceptional circumstances. Whereas American liberals and socialists live in a state of continuous excitement about problems to be solved by governmental action, conservative statesmen generally recommend the patience to allow problems to be "solved" (if solved they ever can be) by the more or less spontaneous responses of the people themselves. The supply of universal schooling in Britain and America, for example, came from churches and communities who valued education; it was only later that governments found reasons for taking it over, and in many respects, political intervention led to widespread decline. That is one of the reasons why the growth of the free-schooling movement is far from the least interesting among the episodes in the book.

Not much in conservatism, then, to fire the blood and stiffen the sinews. Enthusiasm generally makes the conservative heart sink. Yet the story of *The Right Nation* is that of a vast outpouring of enthusiasm. Where in all this can we find anything that might be called "conservative"? It comes, let me suggest, in the negative or skeptical side of the enthusiasm. Libertarians are skeptical of the wisdom of governments, intellectuals mistrust experts and judges, while the religious are easily persuaded that the latest scientific fad need not be regarded as truth itself. Again, conservatism is above all a movement concerned to trust the people—not necessarily on the basis of voting, but on the basis of how they actually live their lives, under law. The conservative tradition often may also incorporate an element of faith: faith particularly

in inherited standards and beliefs, an element supplied in abundance by social conservatives and evangelical Christians. Add to this a touch of juvenile deviltry, a passion *épater les bourgeois* and you have something rich, strong, and virtually indefinable.

The emergence of this conservative movement over the last fifty years has a remarkable, and not entirely agreeable, flavor that will strike any foreign reader of *The Right Nation*. We all knew that America was different, that God and Mammon had been accommodated there in special ways. But the dominance of American culture, and familiarity with California and the Eastern seaboard, has long made foreigners feel entirely at home with the United States. They found much to admire, and even what was not thought admirable—the food, the guns—was at least exotic. The sudden burst of anti-Americanism in Europe over the Iraq war reflects the sudden discovery that "the real America" is not coastal but continental. Texas, long the butt of jokes about American absurdity, suddenly turns out to be direly typical.

THE ODD CAUSE OF EUROPEAN DISILLUSION with America is that Europe itself has come to be dominated by a strange salvationist faith—even a kind of "fundamentalism," though one that cannot speak its name. It is a faith largely shared with the liberalism of coastal America, and it is secular and internationalist. The internationalism has developed into a worship of transnational organizations along with the treaties of rights spawned by such bodies. A formula for a better and more peaceful epoch is being sold to the Third World not as Western culture but as the epitome of universal morality and decency. One element of this worship is that Western states must be exemplary in their obedience to the new peaceful international standards of conduct even when corrupt states are not. The new America entirely lacks patience with this kind of self-restraint. The success of this leftist project depends entirely on convincing outsiders that it is reason incarnate rather than just Christianity for outside consumption. That is why the European Union rejected any reference to Christianity in its draft founding document. It is why European *bien-pensants* get so exercised about the political influence of the religious Right in America. And it is why Europeans have responded to the Islamic challenge by demonizing not Islamicists, but creatures called "fundamentalists." For the pretense must be that we are all guilty, all struggling against the same threat of fanaticism.

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A PROGRESSIVE'S PROGRESS

Love, Poverty, and War: Journeys and Essays, by Christopher Hitchens.
Nation Books, 475 pages, \$16.95

"I WAKE UP EVERY DAY TO A SENSATION of pervading disgust and annoyance," Christopher Hitchens explains at the outset of *Love, Poverty, and War*, his new collection of essays. In due course, he offers a corollary: "There can be no progress without head-on confrontation."

Contrarianism is not a bad way to approach the modern world, because you will seldom be wrong. Hitchens has refined contrarianism into a high art that transcends mere iconoclasm, though one may doubt whether his name will be made into an adjective after the fashion of his hero, George Orwell. Hitchens would be among the first to admit that the cadences are incommensurate: "Hitchensian" doesn't roll off the tongue as neatly as "Orwellian." He shares two important traits with Orwell, nonetheless: his loving skill with the English language, and his revulsion at the smelly little orthodoxies of the Left.

As successful as this combination is, he may not be entirely well-served by channeling his disgust and annoyance into a confrontation with the first person or idea he sees over his morning coffee. Yet he seems to advance from triumph to triumph. What's the secret of his success? He offers a clue in the middle of the book: "No serious person is without contradictions." Sure enough, Hitchens's affection for the United States redeems his chronic indignation and makes his overall project worthy of deep admiration.

Many of the pieces included in this collection are either literary essays from *The Atlantic* or miscellany from *Vanity Fair*. As such they might be considered his hackwork. The world could use more such hackwork. In fact, Hitchens's real calling may be literary rather than political. His *Atlantic* essays, mostly new encounters with old books and authors such as Joyce, Borges, Proust, Kingsley Amis, and Waugh, read surprisingly fresh. But like Orwell—and Lionel Trilling, Joseph Epstein, and Norman Podhoretz—one suspects that Hitchens's literary sensibility is closely related to his political pilgrimage, which now finds him allying himself mostly with the Right after a generation's fealty to the Left.

But it is not easy to put sail to Hitchens's whirlwind. His strong dislikes include Henry Kissinger, Mel Gibson, Bill Clinton, Michael Moore, Noam Chomsky, Pope John Paul II, and, most notoriously, Mother Teresa. (The case of Winston Churchill will be considered

in a moment.) He could probably find a dark side to Mary Poppins. The book is filled with acerbic gems. New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg gets a well-deserved pasting: "And petty is not just Bloomberg's middle name. It is his name.... Who knows what goes on in the tiny, constipated chambers of his mind? All we know for certain is that one of the world's most broad-minded and open cities is now in the hands of a picknose control freak."

Sandwiched between his literary and political pieces are sterling examples of that time-tested genre, the travel essay. While the writing



is first-rate, Hitchens indulges some of the typical Euro-Northeastern prejudices about heartland America. His journey across Route 66 in a borrowed Corvette brings him to Texas:

You hear a lot about the standardization of America, the sameness and drabness of the brand names and the roadside clutter, but you have to be exposed to thousands of miles of it to see how obliterating the process really is. The food! The coffee! The newspapers! The radio! These would all disgrace a mediocre one-party state, or a much less prosperous country.... Happening upon a stray copy of *USA Today* seems like finding Proust in your nightstand drawer instead of a Gideons Bible.

One wonders whether Hitchens isn't consciously playing to the *Vanity Fair* bleachers, since most *Vanity Fair* readers can only under-

stand—or want to understand—the nation's nether regions through red-blue glasses. I've grinned at the same oddities along Route 66, including the largest cross in North America near Groom, Texas, and the Cadillac Ranch outside Amarillo. (Somehow Hitchens missed my favorite Route 66 landmark, Amarillo's Big Texan Steak Ranch, which will serve you a 72-ounce steak for free—if you can eat the whole thing, including side dishes, in under an hour.)

THAT HITCHENS MAY BE PLAYING THE rube card to fool the provincials back in Gotham and the Hamptons is suggested by his enduring admiration and affection for America, which have grown larger in the aftermath of September 11. Let him explain it:

Then there is the rather awkward question: Can one love a country? In the England of my youth, this would have come under the heading of the superfluous: some things just don't need to be affirmed publicly and there is something suspect about those who get too strenuous on the point. I'll go this far, though. The United States of America has been very kind and hospitable to this immigrant, and I would calmly affirm that, in case things should ever become desperate enough for anyone to have to care, my adopted country has found a defender in me. This necessarily broad allegiance came to a tungsten-sharp point in the fall of 2001, when my favorite city in all the world—and a favorite city of the world—was foully assaulted, as was my hometown of Washington D.C., by barbaric nihilists.

In one of the collected essays, written for *Vanity Fair* shortly after September 11, Hitchens was even more elemental, making clear that he would stand with America without equivocation: "one has to be able to say, My country after all.... Shall I take out the papers of citizenship? Wrong question. In every essential way, I already have."

Consequently, Hitchens has trained his lacerating invectives on several of his old allies—in some cases, co-authors—on the Left, such as Noam Chomsky and Edward Said. But no one fares worse than Michael Moore and

his squalid film. "To describe [*Fahrenheit 9/11*] as dishonest and demagogic would almost be to promote those terms to the level of respectability. To describe this film as a piece of crap would be to run the risk of a discourse that would never again rise above the excremental.... *Fahrenheit 9/11* is a sinister exercise in moral frivolity, crudely disguised as an exercise in serious thought." And Moore himself has become "one of the sagging blimps of our sorry, mediocre, celeb-rotten culture."

Hitchens has no patience with the moral-equivalence, we-had-it-coming Leftists. He wrote on *The Nation's* website in October 2001: "I have no hesitation in describing this mentality, carefully and without heat, as soft on crime and soft on fascism. No political coalition is possible with such people and, I'm thankful to say, no political coalition with them is now necessary. It no longer matters what they think." After carrying on in this way for several more weeks at *The Nation*, Hitchens was, in his own words, "excommunicated," ending a more than two-decade association with the Left's flagship journal. He hasn't looked back.

THE FINAL ESSAY OF THE COLLECTION, from *Vanity Fair's* October 2003 issue, describes the fall of Saddam. At the time he wrote the article, the missing WMDs in Iraq were becoming an issue, and the insurgency was starting to escalate. Hitchens has some deserved criticisms of George W. Bush and Tony Blair for insufficiently defending the war to the public, but he does not wring his hands or come within shooting distance of the Q-cliché ("quagmire"). On the contrary, Hitchens argues that Iraq "is emerging from a period of nightmarish rule to which anything would be preferable. So dare to repeat, in spite of everything, the breathless question: What if it works?" Right now it looks like it might, but only because Bush didn't lose his nerve. Perhaps Hitchens's relative silence about Bush—put it this way: he hasn't tossed barbs at Bush the way he has at just about everyone else—is a sign of grudging respect from a critic who isn't accustomed to showing any to political figures.

This defect shows itself fully in the opening essay of the book, which attempts to cut Winston Churchill down to size. Hitchens spends most of the essay disputing what he calls the "consecrated narrative" about Churchill—the "cult" of Churchill. He tempers his massive debunking effort with what he admits is the man's one redeeming quality. He was right about the Nazis:

Some saving intuition prompted Churchill to recognize, and to name out loud, the pornographic and catastrophically destructive nature of the foe. Only

this redeeming x-factor justifies all the rest—the paradoxes and inconsistencies, to be sure, and even the hypocrisy.... He excoriated [Nazism] as a wicked and nihilistic thing. That appears facile now, but it was exceedingly uncommon then.

This won't do. Even if one concedes, for the sake of argument, that all Hitchens's criticisms are correct, it is remarkably superficial to attribute Churchill's one redeeming virtue to an unintelligible "x-factor" or "intuition." Hitchens seems incapable of pondering whether the qualities that led Churchill to his clarity about the Nazis were on display in the other controversial chapters in Churchill's career. Hitchens confuses supreme ego and magnanimity with dangerous or contemptible megalomania. Indeed, he more than once interprets Churchill as a Hegelian figure, more lucky than good.

Rather than a serious examination of Churchill's character strengths and weaknesses, we get an appalling catalogue of errors and myths about Churchill, starting with the chestnut that actor Norman Shelley read several of Churchill's key 1940 speeches to the British people, "perhaps because Churchill was too incapacitated by drink to deliver the speeches himself." This myth has been thoroughly recycled and debunked over the years, but Hitchens falls for it, probably because its most recent incarnation came from his friend, fellow leftist columnist Alexander Cockburn, in 2001. (Hitchens's essay originally appeared as a cover story in *The Atlantic*, and when the letters poured in wondering what happened to basic fact-checking at the magazine, Hitchens beat a partial, chagrined retreat.)

But that is only the beginning of the errors and recycled slanders. Another familiar charge that Hitchens revives is that Churchill knew of the coming German bombing of Coventry, but did nothing to stop it for fear of compromising the British code-breaking efforts. "The allegation has been in print for fifteen years [closer to 25 actually], and I have never seen it addressed by the Great Man's defenders, let alone rebutted." This merely shows that Hitchens hasn't read everything, despite the impression he likes to give. At least four British historians—Norman Longmate, Ronald Levin, Harry Hensley, and David Stafford—have refuted this widely held myth, as far back as 1979. Likewise, Hitchens alleges, Churchill possibly knew about Pearl Harbor in advance but declined to tell FDR—also disputed by numerous historians. He endorses the view that Churchill was complicit in a conspiracy to bring about the sinking of the *Lusitania* in World War I, a charge that has been chewed over and generally rejected for decades.

Hitchens accepts credulously every criti-

cism and denigration of Churchill, and reads very superficially overall. This problem, especially, comes to light in an aside about William Manchester's unfinished Churchill biography. "In an extraordinary gesture," Hitchens writes, "Manchester rendered Churchill's wartime speeches as blank verse, with carefully incised line breaks and verse settings." But this is no "gesture." Manchester's books, like Martin Gilbert's, faithfully reproduce the format Churchill employed to give speeches—a fact Hitchens would have picked up had he read either author with any care, thus sparing him embarrassment.

IN THE INTRODUCTION TO *LOVE, POVERTY, and War*, Hitchens betrays his low opinion of politics: "Did politics always seem to be a sordid auction between banal populists?" One lesson he took from September 11 is that "there is no refuge from political engagement, and that if you try and hide from public life, it will assuredly come and invade your precious private sphere." Hitchens's vague anti-political temperament is a residue of his days on the Left, where the denigration of political greatness is an essential aspect of radical ideology. His artful critical faculty cannot ultimately disguise his cynicism. As Churchill once said of another grand weakness (appeasement): "It is too easy to be good."

An equally apt summation of the problem comes from British historian Geoffrey Elton, who wrote:

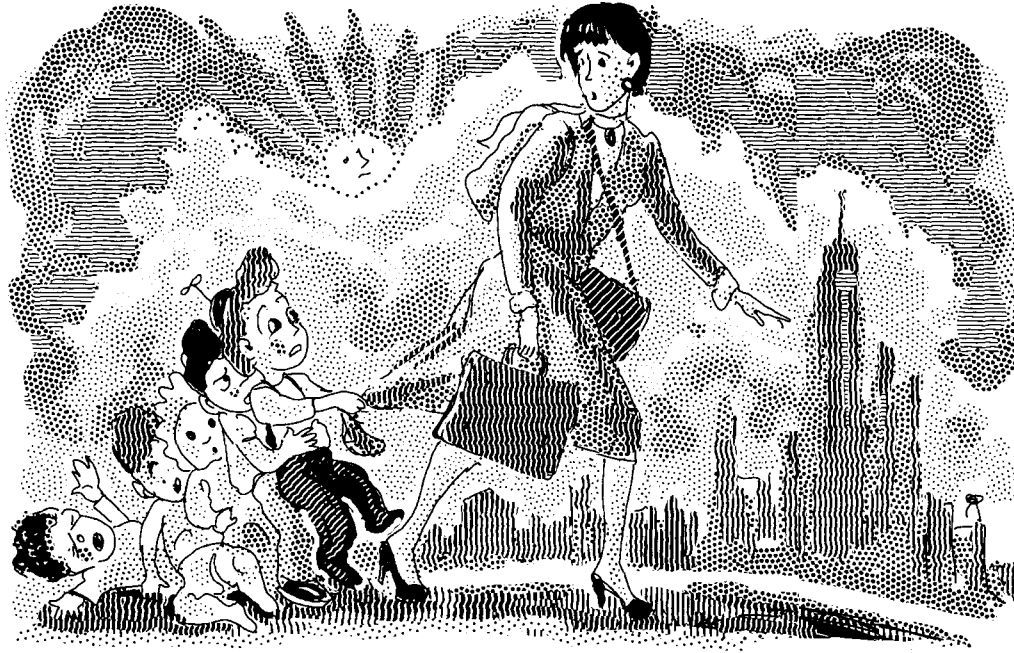
When I meet a historian who cannot think that there have been great men, great men moreover in politics, I feel myself in the presence of a bad historian. And there are times when I incline to judge all historians by their opinion of Winston Churchill—whether they can see that, no matter how much better the details, often damaging, of the man and his career become known, he still remains, quite simply, a great man.

Hitchens fails Elton's test. We might say then that Hitchens's progress since September 11 has brought him halfway to a sensible understanding of politics. He knows who the bad guys are, and while he seems to know who the good guys are and why, his old reflexes are against them. If he gets over this, he'll have at least a fighting chance to establish his place as an essayist alongside Orwell.

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OUTSOURCING OUR CHILDREN

Home-Along America: The Hidden Toll of Day Care, Behavioral Drugs, and Other Parent Substitutes,
by Mary Eberstadt. Sentinel (Penguin), 218 pages, \$25.95



LIONEL TRILLING WROTE IN *BEYOND CULTURE*: "Somewhere in the child, somewhere in the adult, there is a hard, irreducible, stubborn core of biological urgency, and biological necessity, and biological *reason* that culture cannot reach and that reserves the right, which sooner or later it will exercise, to judge the culture and resist and revise it." As a woman who left the practice of law in 1959 to be a mother at home and who remained in that role until our children left for college, I have been judging, resisting, and seeking to revise the culture in which I live. This choice to stay home sprang from a sense of biological urgency, necessity, and *reason*, telling me that my children were the most important beings in the world and that their welfare required, above all else, my presence in the home. I yearned to be with my children as, I assumed, they yearned to be with me. My choice was easy because homemaking and childrearing were respected occupations then, and, although our income was reduced by half, my husband never shrank from being the sole breadwinner, nor did he ever make me feel that I was inferior to him or wasting my education because I no longer earned a paycheck.

The culture quickly changed, however, with the arrival of a career-oriented feminist movement. Feminists successfully propagated the message that homemaking and childrearing were second-class endeavors, which prevented women from achieving the personal fulfillment

and social status secured by participation in the paid work force. Our society, in particular the media and academia, wholeheartedly endorsed this feminist ideology, and homemakers were consistently disparaged and their social and economic security were fatally undermined by the enactment in all 50 states of no-fault divorce laws that warned mothers it was unsafe to devote themselves to raising children. The result was an unprecedented influx of mothers into the workplace so that, by 1985, the majority of mothers with children under six were working outside the home.

In her wonderfully insightful and eminently sensible book, Mary Eberstadt, a mother of four children who works from home for the Hoover Institution, sets forth evidence of the harm done to children by the maternal exodus responsible for the "Home-Along America" she rightly deplores. Discussing many facets of children's lives, she may tell us what we already know, but she analyzes the subject with a fresh insight. She recognizes that her book violates a major taboo today about any discussion of "whether and just how much children need their parents—especially their mothers." This taboo seeks to protect working mothers from feeling guilty, and Eberstadt sensibly concludes her book by observing that those who "cannot choose otherwise," such as single parents, "have nothing to feel guilty about." As for those who do have a choice, perhaps the "continuing complaints about

the guilt felt by absent mothers" may be "further proof of a social experiment run amok."

This social experiment is, of course, the mother-child separation required by the feminist notion that a woman's personal fulfillment requires her energetic participation in the workplace. Eberstadt calls defenders of this conceit "separationists": those who believe that women's freedom to work in the paid marketplace justifies separation from their children, and who refuse to consider whether the children and adolescents left behind by the adult exodus have suffered. She challenges a society, which only seems concerned with making it easier and cheaper for women to "combine work and family," to consider how small children actually experience being in daycare all day. She makes the very sensible point that the daycare debate is never about what it feels like for the infant and children in day care, but always about what the outcomes are in terms of personality development and cognitive ability. "The daycare proof," separationists believe, "is in the achievement pudding." Separationists, however, are often not around children, who, in their lives, have been made "someone else's problem."

WE HAVE LONG KNOWN THAT BEING in day-care centers increases illnesses among children, but Eberstadt analyzes this problem from the child's, not the adult's, perspective. What must it be like for a

sick child, dosed with Tylenol to disguise an illness before being dropped off at the center? "Anyone actually charged with the care of little children," she observes, "knows that a sick baby or toddler is a uniquely pitiful thing, in part because such a child is too young to understand why." Through the eyes of children, Eberstadt details the numerous areas in which their lives have worsened during the period when increasing numbers of mothers left the home, and she establishes the connections between parental absence and children's present afflictions.

Parental absence, she demonstrates, is implicated in the savage behaviors of serial and teenaged killers and in increased feral behaviors ranging from elementary school violence to suicides (those born in the 1970s and 1980s are three to four times more likely to commit suicide than people of a comparable age who were born at mid-century). Parental absence is also implicated in the obesity epidemic among children, which occurred when adults were no longer around to police children's eating habits and when shorter periods of breast-feeding by working mothers deprived babies of the protection against obesity that breast-feeding affords. She connects parental absence to the explosion in the number of children diagnosed with mental disorders: depression rates in children have risen tenfold since the end of World War II and children in single-parent families are two to three times more likely to have emotional and behavioral problems. And parental absence is again implicated in the staggering increase in the number of children and teenagers diagnosed with attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, conduct disorder, oppositional defiance disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and autism.

EBERSTADT MAKES A POWERFUL CASE that these disorders are overdiagnosed and that the psychotropic drugs used to treat them—which are so hard on the children, who are their harshest critics—are overprescribed. Prescription drug use is growing faster among children than among the elderly and baby boomers (Ritalin production increased more than 700% between 1990 and 2000). These drugs have been available for decades, but the revolution in their use began only in the 1990s. The reason, says Eberstadt, is that the too busy parents and teachers want to make children easier to deal with; "yesterday's children—which is to say today's adults—enjoyed the luxury of being considered 'normal' in ways that today's children increasingly do not." The parents of yesterday had a wider experience with their children and thus "a more expansive idea of child normality." Parents who spend less time with their children "find

their behavior more problematic and in need of alteration." And so, encouraged by a psychiatric profession that refuses to consider a child's environment and believes that antisocial behavior stems only from an underlying disorder, parents acquiesce in what Eberstadt calls "the pharmaceutical outsourcing of childhood."

They also acquiesce in the ultimate outsourcing of specialty boarding schools, which arose, one operator explains, because of the breakdown in the family. Parents involved in messy divorces, bitter custody battles, and remarriages often send teenagers to these schools for behavior-modification through "tough love" and physical deprivation not because they are involved in drugs or crime or violence—as was the case with reform schools of yesteryear—but because "they were in the way of what adults needed or wanted to do."

Because they are relieved that the teenage birth rate has declined since 1992—although the proportion of young people who have had sex at an early age has increased and rates of both pregnancy and childbearing among U.S. adolescents are still substantially higher than in comparable countries—parents seem unconcerned with the great increase in sexually transmitted diseases among adolescents. Except in the case of male homosexuals, STDs hurt girls far more than boys and can lead to infertility and cancer. Condoms will not stop the human papillomavirus "from causing its signature problems" of recurring genital warts and cervical cancer (99.7% of cervical cancers are caused by the human papillomavirus). Most teen sex occurs in the home after school so that, just as with substance abuse, the controlling factor in prevention is parental presence.

Pervading Eberstadt's analysis is her acute insight that our culture's embrace of the separationist ideology and women's acceptance of daily separation from their children has desensitized adults to what babies and children need. Adult moral sensibility has been coarsened, says Eberstadt, and parents refuse even to consider that their disorderly children "might actually have authentic reasons for doing what they do [and] might be responding rationally to arrangements that look irrational, wrong, or stressful from their point of view." Some of their actions may be "the normal reactions of youngsters to the arguably inhuman rhythms of their days." Perhaps "some babies and toddlers just aren't cut out for spending most of their tiny lives in a room filled with unrelated children and unrelated adults." Eberstadt's discussion makes me think that perhaps the behaviors of these children are the only way they can exercise what Lionel Trilling called their biological right to judge and resist a culture that is treat-

ing them in such an unnatural, inhuman way.

Yet as shown by Eberstadt's analysis of parents' reaction to the music that appeals to teenagers today, parents seek to shift responsibility away from themselves. They deplore the themes of violence, misogyny, sexual exploitation, and child abuse, but avoid asking what this "primal scream of teenage music" tells us about today's teenagers. This, she says, is the music of abandonment, compulsively insisting "on the damage wrought by broken homes, family dysfunction, checked-out parents, and (especially) absent fathers." In answer to the feminists who excoriated "Ozzie and Harriet as an artifact of 1950s-style oppression," the children raised according to separationist ideology have "enshrined a new generation of music idols whose shared generational signature in song after song is to rage about what *not* having had a nuclear family has done to them."

THE GOAL OF EBERSTADT'S BOOK IS TO convince some women who have a choice to raise their children at home and some parents to stay together for the sake of their children. If the number of women at home increases and the number of absent fathers decreases, their own children will have fewer problems and society will improve: elementary school classes, which suffer from the large number of children whose stay in day care has made them belligerent and aggressive, will become more manageable for teachers and less stressful for students. If more mothers are around the neighborhood in the daytime and more fathers are there to play ball at night, it may improve the lives of even the children in the neighborhood with absent parents. Eberstadt hopes that her evidence and argument will help raise the moral bar regarding how the strongest members of our society treat the weakest. This is an optimistic hope, indeed, in a society that has the highest abortion rate in the Western world and watched for 13 days while Terri Schiavo was allowed to dehydrate and starve to death, over the objection of her parents and at the behest of a husband who was living with another woman with whom he had two children.

Will Eberstadt persuade some mothers to stay home? Surveys show that most people think that schools in general are bad today, but that the schools their own children attend are good. In my experience, most mothers employing nannies seem to think that they have found a Mary Poppins, who is better-suited to raising children than they are; most mothers whose children are in some other form of childcare seem satisfied with their arrangement as well, except that it would be better if someone else paid for it. Eberstadt, herself, is satisfied with her arrangement to work at home while her

youngest child is cared for there by a baby-sitter or relative, even though the Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development, the largest long-term study of child care in the United States and one that she cites, finds that the harms resulting from child care are the same whether care is by a nanny, a relative, or institutional day care—i.e., the controlling variable is maternal care.

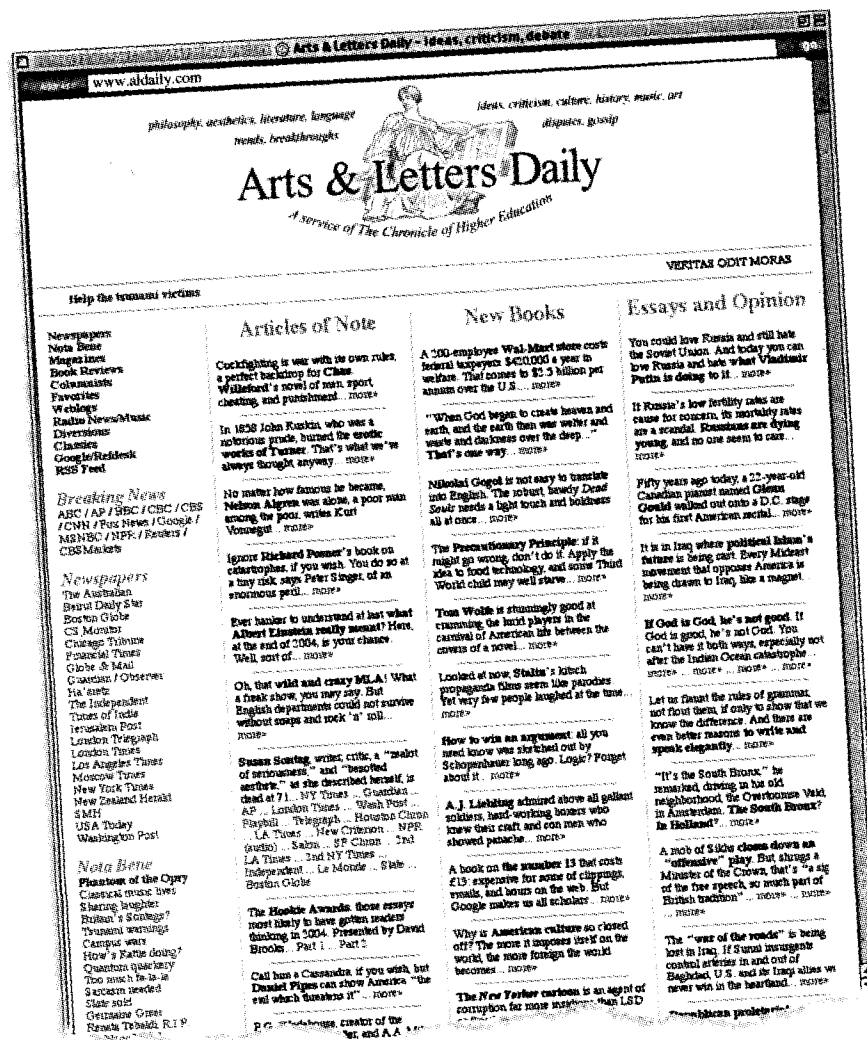
In 1977, Selma Fraiberg's *Every Child's Birthright: In Defense of Mothering* argued that children needed a continuity of mothering that was sorely lacking in the "child storage houses," where children were warehoused like little packages while their mothers worked. Earlier, Harry F. Harlow's famous experiment substituting cloth and wire monkeys for mother monkeys demonstrated the devastating

effects of separation from the mother and the fact that holding and cuddling the infant are as important as feeding. Yet as Eberstadt amply documents, this information did not prevent the influx of women into the workplace. Perhaps our responses to our children are not based so much on factual information as on emotions and biological urgings, and these can be repressed and molded by a society as deeply committed to the feminist goal of separation as ours has become.

SOME WOMEN, OF COURSE, WILL RESPOND to maternal yearnings. For them, *Home-Alone America* is a great gift. Any mother who wants to raise her child at home should show this book to her husband if he has any qualms about the value of his assuming the

breadwinning role. Many, like myself, will surely find it a valuable resource when arguing for the reform of no-fault divorce laws and when countering the arguments of separationists that it is in the best interests of women, their children, and society that all mothers work outside the home. If the culture can be revised so that it again respects and supports mothers who devote themselves to childrearing, more mothers may have the courage to respond to that most natural, humane yearning within them to be with their children, and then fewer children will suffer the injuries to their soul so movingly described by Eberstadt.

F. Carolyn Graglia is the author of *Domestic Tranquility: A Brief Against Feminism* (Spence Publishing Co.).



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PLAYING GOD

Preaching Eugenics: Religious Leaders and the American Eugenics Movement,
by Christine Rosen. Oxford University Press, 296 pages, \$35

FOR EARLY 20TH-CENTURY AMERICAN elites in the full flush of the Progressive movement, regulating reproduction through eugenics offered a promising solution to the multiplying social problems of the modern age. That man was an evolutionary being they had no doubt. But he had now progressed to the point where he could take charge of his own evolution, both political and biological, and replace the wasteful methods of natural selection with the efficient and ethical method of science. For the sake of the race's improvement, particularly the part of it in their own country, the eugenicists advocated a broad, high-minded program that included state-sponsored sterilization, immigration restriction, birth control, and restrictive marriage laws.

All this is in the history books, of course, even if carefully kept from full view. What Christine Rosen, a fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, brings to the table in her well-researched and engaging study, *Preaching Eugenics*, is the eager participation of many religiously-minded Americans in the eugenics project. "During the first few decades of the twentieth century," she writes,

eugenics flourished in the liberal Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish mainstream; clerics, rabbis, and lay leaders wrote books and articles about eugenics, joined eugenics organizations, and lobbied for eugenics legislation. They grafted elements of the eugenics message onto their own efforts to pursue religious-based charity in their churches and adopted eugenic solutions to the social problems that beset their communities. They explored the eugenic implications of the biblical Ten Commandments and investigated the hereditary lessons embedded in the parables of Jesus.

Rosen presents ample evidence of cooperation between religious and secular eugenicists. In 1926, the American Eugenics Society conducted the first "eugenic sermon contest." The minister, priest, or rabbi who best addressed the topic "Religion and Eugenics: Does the church have any responsibility for improving the human stock?" brought home \$500. During the 1920s, *Eugenics* magazine published a special "preachers issue." Rev. Kenneth C. MacArthur contributed

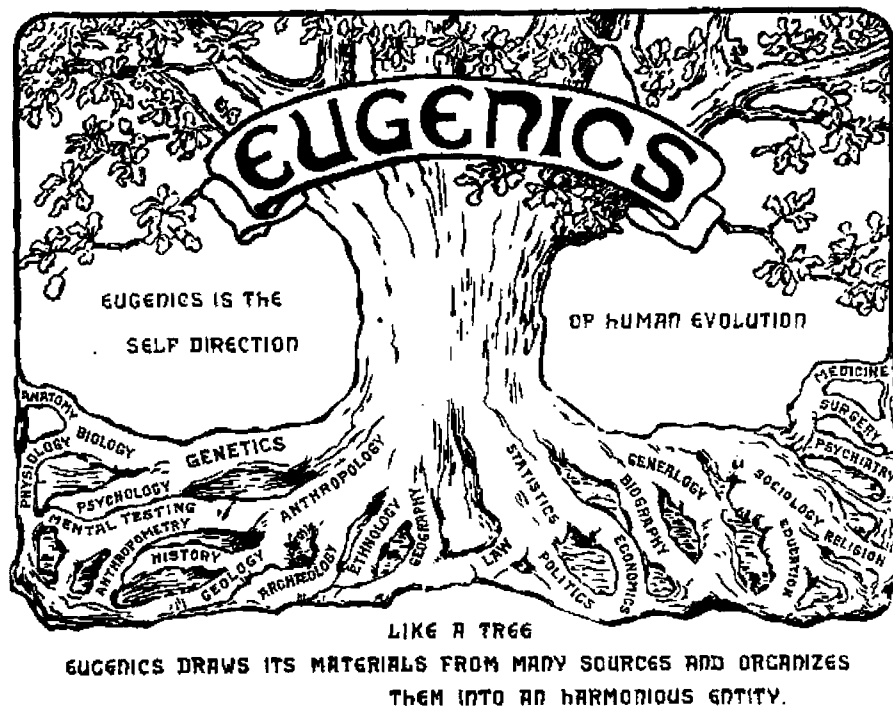
a banner celebrating "Kansas' Best Crop." And clergymen eagerly filled positions in eugenics organizations. Rev. Newell Dwight Hillis advised the Eugenics Record Office—the movement's *de facto* headquarters, located in Cold Spring Harbor, New York—and organized the Race Betterment Conference of 1914. Within the American Eugenics Society, the Committee of Cooperation with Clergymen was one of the largest and best-funded branches.

Rather than avoiding religion, eugenics organizations sought to add theological force to their arguments. To provide the "eugenic faith" with an "accessible credo," the American Eugenics Society published a *Eugenics Catechism*. ("Q: What is the most precious thing in the world? A: The human germplasm.") Not to be outdone, Albert Edward Wiggam, a nationally known eugenicist, handed down "Wiggam's Ten Commandments."

BEFORE PREACHING *Eugenics*, the conventional view had reduced the relationship between scientific and religious opinion in early 20th-century America to a single battle over

evolution at the famous Scopes Monkey Trial (1925). On all hot-button issues, religion and science were supposedly at loggerheads. Rosen tears apart this mistaken assumption. The Scopes Trial notwithstanding, her book shows that religious and secular opinion shared much in common when it came to the era's broader attempt to spur human evolution through eugenics.

Rosen offers several reasons for this long overlooked nexus between religious and secular eugenicists. As Rosen explains, both science and religion pay close attention to what lies inside human beings, and this fact had important consequences at the turn of the 20th century. Hereditary studies were then a new phenomenon, capturing much public attention: a famous account of the Jukes family detailed seven



The illustration was produced in 1921 for an exhibit on eugenics at the Museum of Natural History in New York City

an article that linked eugenics with the Kingdom of God. Eugenics, MacArthur reasoned, would improve "the very material from which to recruit the citizenry of the commonwealth of Christ among men." "The more fully [eugenic proposals] are adopted," he concluded, "the more rapidly will the ends for which the church exists be furthered." MacArthur subsequently landed a monthly column in the magazine.

Clergymen regularly enrolled their households in "Fitter Family" contests sponsored across the country by the American Eugenics Society to promote "a feeling of family and racial consciousness and responsibility." Rev. Henry Apel's family earned top prize at a Kansas state fair, where the winning clan earned a customary victory lap in an automobile decorated with

generations of degenerate behavior. These hereditary studies led to the conclusion that anti-social conduct was passed on genetically. To some religious thinkers, this merely affirmed Scripture's repeated guarantees that a tree may be judged by its fruit. Rosen notes that Rev. Oscar McCulloch published one of the first eugenic family studies. Dismayed by what he saw as the "decaying stock" around him, the Indianapolis minister drafted and successfully lobbied for legislation that authorized state boards to "take charge of children of vicious or incompetent parents." Indiana, McCulloch's home state, would later become the first state to legalize eugenic sterilization.

In addition, the theology of the Social Gospel movement pervaded mainstream Protestant congregations, which helps to explain the eugenics movement's popularity and cachet. Keen supporters of reform, Social Gospel adherents saw redemption as a matter for society as much as for the individual. By reforming Mammon, they believed that man could usher in the Kingdom of God on earth. Thus Social Gospel leaders took active roles in efforts to address the factors deemed responsible for social decay. They organized charities that sought to alleviate poverty and to improve public health, housing, and nutrition standards. Within the Social Gospel movement, however, some believed that targeting the environmental factors responsible for social decay was insufficient. Persuaded by the eugenic family studies he had conducted, Rev. McCulloch argued that charitable assistance encouraged recipients "in this idle, wandering life, and in the propagation of similarly disposed children." Stronger measures were necessary.

INITIALLY, EUGENICISTS—BOTH SECULAR and religious—had adhered to a philosophy of "positive" eugenics, most famously articulated by Theodore Roosevelt, which emphasized increasing the reproduction rates of

society's good stock. By the early 20th century, "negative" eugenics, with its emphasis on limiting the population of those deemed less fit, gained the upper hand within the movement. This change coincided with the rise of an administrative elite, or what historian Christopher Lasch referred to as "helping professionals." With scientific precision, these managerial experts could improve the commonweal by regulating the selfish impulses of defective individuals. Emboldened by advances in medical technology, negative eugenicists openly supported state-sponsored sterilization.

As Rosen shows, many religious leaders went along with the trend toward negative eugenics. At the 1927 Episcopal Church Congress, Rev. Henry Lewis defended the "sterilization of mental defectives." Rt. Rev. Ernest W. Barnes explained that any objections to "repressive action" will vanish "[w]hen religious people realize that, in thus preventing the survival of the socially unfit, they are working in accordance with the plan by which God has brought humanity so far along the road." Rev. George Reid Andrews, who left active ministry to serve as an official in the American Eugenics Society, proposed in one 1937 speech that the best way to prevent social malaise was to "get these people out of circulation," referring to "idiots, imbeciles, and morons."

Physicians, reformers, state lawmakers, and finally the U.S. Supreme Court in *Buck v. Bell* (1927) registered their support for eugenic sterilization. In the years immediately following *Buck*, 18 states introduced legislation authorizing eugenic sterilization, and in the next decade the number of men and women sterilized in state institutions quadrupled. On top of its moral repugnance, the *Buck* decision illustrates the hubris behind state-sponsored sterilization: that government experts could know which members of society were unfit to have children. Though Justice Oliver Wendell

Holmes, Jr.'s, quip in the majority opinion is notorious ("Three generations of imbeciles are enough"), few know that Vivian Bell, the supposedly feeble-minded daughter of Carrie Buck, did well enough in her brief time at school to land on the honor roll.

PREACHING EUGENICS INCLUDES A CHAPTER on the Catholic Church's opposition to sterilization. American Catholic officials such as Msgr. John A. Ryan vociferously opposed eugenic sterilization, and Rome officially condemned the practice in the 1930 encyclical *Casti Connubii*. Interestingly, the Church's position against sterilization relied upon more secular reasoning than did the practice's many religious supporters. In *Casti Connubii*, Pope Pius XI drew on natural-rights philosophy to link the right of bodily integrity with the limits of state power: "Public magistrates have no direct power over the bodies of their subjects, therefore, where no crime has taken place and there is no cause present for grave punishment, they can never directly harm, or tamper with the integrity of the body, either for the reasons of eugenics or for any other reason."

Preaching Eugenics comes at a time when "religious" and "conservative" are taken as one and the same. Yet, as Rosen ably shows, one of the major Progressive-era efforts benefited from plenty of religious zeal. *Preaching Eugenics* is not simply revealing history, but an insightful commentary on contemporary debates, where it is not always clear which end of the political spectrum is the more dogmatic: the "secular" side that believes only fully conscious individuals deserve complete legal status, or the "religious" side that believes that a human body is enough to warrant human dignity.

Michael Toth is pursuing law and graduate studies at the University of Virginia.



A Critical Symposium

THE LINCOLN BEDROOM

The Intimate World of Abraham Lincoln,
by C.A. Tripp.

Free Press, 384 pages, \$27



C.A. Tripp's *The Intimate World of Abraham Lincoln* ignited a firestorm of debate when it was published, posthumously, in 2004. Tripp, a psychologist and sex researcher, claimed in the book to offer a "full examination of Lincoln's inner life and relationships," concluding that Lincoln was "predominantly homosexual" and that his homosexuality informed his beliefs on slavery, morality, and religion. The *Claremont Review of Books* invited Prof. Allen C. Guelzo to select a distinguished group of scholars and Lincoln experts to address the book and its claims. The result is the following critical symposium.

Allen C. Guelzo

WHEN C.A. TRIPP'S *THE INTIMATE World of Abraham Lincoln* was published (by Free Press last December posthumously, since Tripp died of AIDS in 2003), anyone with a good set of cultural ears might have heard a faint moan coming from the special historical workshop housing the students, scholars, and biographers of Abraham Lincoln. It was not the conspiratorial moan Tripp had predicted, as if he had liberated some great secret which was striding across the land, committing truth. It was more like the moan of the weary, who have seen this kind of thing before, time and again. The moan is not even about Tripp or his book, so much as it is about how much time they'll have to waste, fielding questions from those, whether lovers or haters of Abraham Lincoln, who believe this is the one simple explanation of everything about him. As Edward Steers says (in the first of the thumbnail critiques of Tripp's book which

follow), this kind of noisy announcement of the one, true key to the "secret" of Abraham Lincoln—succeeding Lincoln-and-Marfan's-Syndrome, Lincoln-and-Freemasonry, Lincoln-and-Swedenborgianism—has happened before, and will doubtless happen again as long as someone has an agenda he feels the need to hitch to Abraham Lincoln.

The argument of the book is plain enough to capture in a few sentences. Recollections by and of the young Lincoln point to homoerotic attractions and attractiveness, leading him to beds shared with several young men, including (in later years) one of the officers charged with protecting his life. Lincoln's marriage to Mary Todd was a misery, not because Mary was a "hellcat," but because Lincoln was violating his own homosexual nature. Lincoln's marvelous resiliency, humility, and charity were lessons he learned from experiencing the intolerance of a homophobic culture. But the experience exacted a toll, a toll paid in guilt and a sense of alienation from others, both of which show up

in his reticence about his private life and in his religious ideas. Lincoln was not only "predominantly homosexual," but his homosexuality is (in the words of Jean Baker, who wrote an afterword to *The Intimate World of Abraham Lincoln*) the key to "his independence and his ability to take anti-Establishment positions like the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation."

If this is not preposterous, then the word should be declared extinct. The whole proposition ought to collapse under the weight of one question: if Lincoln was a homosexual, why haven't we heard of this before? Surely Lincoln was so public a figure, and homosexuality so leprous an accusation in Victorian America, that not even P.T. Barnum, the Cardiff Giant, and the Feejee Mermaid could have distracted attention from a president who committed sodomy with the captain of his guard.

But this perfectly commonsensical objection has the weight of three gigantic considerations leaning against it. One is rooted, stubbornly and perversely, in the very origins of the American

experience itself. None of the 17th-century adventurers who made the appalling transit of the north Atlantic to the New World did so because they were happy, contented, and at peace with the world. They were a general sampling of Europe's unwanted riff-raff—precisely the sort who had every reason to look on the world darkly, as a place full of vast evil powers (the slavers, the shanghiers, the landlords, the pope) who had suppressed the truth in unrighteousness. This is what Richard Hofstadter delighted in calling “the paranoid style,” and its devotees are as varied as the detectives of the Popish Plot and the hawkers of conspiracy magazines on Dealey Plaza. Tripp, brandishing his secret sexual decoding key and confounding the great plot to deceive and mislead Americans about Lincoln, is simply twitching to the same beat.

Our persistent sense that the truth is always being hidden behind veils was fed by the Romantics, nurtured by Marxist theories of false-consciousness and hegemony, and gorged upon in this generation by postmodernists whose stock-in-trade is uncovering hidden traces of oppression in literary and social “texts.” When no “narrative” can be trusted, there should be no surprise that the “subaltern” and the anti-narrative become the default explanations; and when the striking of postmodern poses becomes fashionable in popular historical writing, it's no wonder that Lincoln should be explained in terms of what he did in the closet rather than what he did as president. In the postmodern climate, nothing is what it appears to be, and so postmodernism contributes its mite to making a homosexual Lincoln plausible.

But the heritage of paranoia and the influence of the postmoderns only partly explain why Lincoln's historical reputation has proven so susceptible to these rituals of re-negotiation, and why Tripp's book on Lincoln and homosexuality broke with such sensational fanfare. That, pretty plainly, is a function of our cultural obsession with sexuality. Where we once defined the self in terms of the soul, we now define it in terms of copulation, and derive “identity” from sexuality. This has now become particularly true for homosexuality, which attempts to ground homosexual practice in a person's root nature. This, as it is designed to do, renders prosecution unfair and makes the denial of civil equality to homosexual unions invidious.

But as Richard Taruskin once remarked (in a review of several books on Tchaikovsky), in the 19th century, homosexuality did not “essentialize” a person, “did not typecast, or stereotype, or render one's nature darkly and irrevocably Other.” Homosexuality was regarded as a vice, and particularly an upper-class one, but it was no more revealing about one's behavior or emotional life than any other form of lib-

ertinage. That makes it even more unlikely that a strait-laced, teetotaling, bourgeois male like Lincoln would have found anything even passably interesting in 19th-century homosexuality. And it underscores how completely the idea that sexuality is the key to Lincoln's “intimate world” is a product of Tripp's culture, not to mention Tripp's own personal and professional inclinations, rather than Lincoln's.

As Lucas Morel asks: is Lincoln's sexuality important? Is it really the simple answer? Do we really need to get “intimate” with Lincoln?

Allen C. Guelzo is the Henry R. Luce Professor of the Civil War Era at Gettysburg College, and the winner of the Lincoln Prize in 2000 for Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President (Eerdmans) and in 2005 for Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation: The End of Slavery in America (Simon & Schuster).



Edward Steers, Jr.

ABRAM LINCOLN HAS BEEN A FAVORITE subject from every side of history. By turns, he has been both hero and villain. As hero, Lincoln has been sanctified as the Savior of the Union, the Great Emancipator, the Man of the People. And in the role of villain (especially for neo-Confederates who despise him for preserving the Union), he has been dismissed as illegitimate by birth, boorish in behavior, a despot who savaged the Constitution while waging a brutal war of destruction, a closet racist who was forced into issuing the Emancipation Proclamation. Americans of almost every persuasion have wanted to pin their tail to Abraham Lincoln's donkey.

So instead of offering something entirely unique, C.A. Tripp has really only joined a long line of tail-pinders, the only novelty being that his argument centers on Lincoln's recorded behavior with other men—behavior that today might raise suspicions of homosexuality, or bisexuality—that included sleeping with various men in the same bed, showing a special affection for certain “young” men, and ending his letters to certain men with “yours forever.”

And like the tail-pinders, there is just enough verisimilitude in Tripp's evidence to keep the head of his argument from sinking under the weight of its own flummery. There is, for example, sufficient evidence to believe that Lincoln's marriage to Mary Todd had difficult moments. That Lincoln was attracted to young, handsome Elmer Ellsworth and aided his career at every turn is true. That Lincoln

slept for four years in the same bed with his best friend Joshua Speed is true. That he invited a young Captain of his guard, David Derickson, to share his bed at the Soldiers' Home when Mary Lincoln was away is also true. Those are the facts.

Of course, this has to stand beside the heterosexual love affairs Lincoln had (Ann Rutledge, Mary Owens, Matilda Edwards, Sarah Rickard, and Mary Todd), the numerous witnesses who claimed he had “a strong passion for women,” the half-dozen other men Lincoln wrote “yours forever” to, and Lincoln's openness in discussing his affection for certain young men he took under his wing—an openness that belies his being a “closet” homosexual. Only by some highly selective fact-picking can Tripp force Lincoln into the mold of his argument—which is precisely the same process that makes all the other tail-pinders look like participants at a children's party rather than serious historians. It is possible, by Tripp's method of carefully selecting Lincoln's words and behavior, to portray him as an avowed racist who cared nothing for blacks, or a ruthless president who disdained the Constitution and civil liberties, and so on. Rather than follow the data wherever it may lead him, Tripp follows some of the data to where he wants it to lead him.

Edward Steers, Jr., is the author of Blood on the Moon: The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln (University Press of Kentucky).



Joan L. Flinspach

THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD STARTS WITH a hypothesis and then tests the theory to see if it's true. By contrast, the historical method is to conduct research first and from that research arrive at an interpretation of the data. And the fact that C.A. Tripp was a social scientist rather than a historian may lie at the root of his bizarre effort to remake Lincoln in the image of a Tchaikovsky or an Oscar Wilde. Tripp has applied the scientific method to history—presenting a theory or hypothesis first and then through research trying to prove it—and ends up cross-applying his scientific training to a field that demands a methodology that is completely foreign to him.

This may be one reason why Tripp is so erratic in dealing with his sources. He cites David Donald's *Lincoln* as an authority on one point and a dupe on another. He finds William H. Herndon, Lincoln's law partner, a reliable

source for his argument on Lincoln's relationship with Billy Greene and praises Herndon, saying that he was "more evenhanded than many of her [Mary Todd Lincoln's] critics, and more generous than she deserved." Yet during his discussion of Ann Rutledge, Tripp concludes that Lincoln's relationship with her took "shape in Herndon's lively imagination." By doing this Tripp creates a level of mistrust for the reader and weakens his own argument.

I know that many historians have chosen to criticize Tripp's book from a factual, or on a point-by-point, basis. My criticism, however, is methodological—not only is Tripp's conclusion flawed, but his entire approach to the question is an example of the man who has only one tool, a hammer, and so makes every problem into a nail. Indeed, how can a reader agree with Tripp's premise when his method for forming that premise and his technique for evaluating it do not hold water?

Joan L. Flinspach is President and CEO of the Lincoln Museum (Fort Wayne, Indiana).



John Y. Simon

IN 1837, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, NEWLY ARRIVED in Springfield, Illinois, looking for a place to sleep, accepted an invitation from Joshua Fry Speed to share a bed over his store. Lincoln and Speed slept together for nearly four years. The question is, did Lincoln simply follow common practice in a society short of beds or was something more significant involved? Lincoln was no stranger to sharing beds. He probably slept with his stepbrother John D. Johnston in Thomas Lincoln's Indiana cabin before striking out for New Salem, where the penniless youngster shared beds with several young men seeking to establish themselves. After his marriage in 1842, Lincoln rode the circuit with other attorneys, traveling to inadequate county seat boarding houses where bed sharing was inevitable. Even as president, escaping Washington heat in the Soldiers' Home, Lincoln invited Captain David D. Derickson into his bed.

As a disciple of Dr. Alfred Kinsey, Dr. C. A. Tripp is hot to describe such nocturnal practices as homosexual. But were they? During the four years that Lincoln and Speed shared a bed in Springfield, William H. Herndon, Lincoln's future law partner, shared another bed in the same room. Later, as Lincoln's biographer, Herndon was dedicated to discovering

and disclosing truthful information, however embarrassing or inappropriate by Victorian standards. He never doubted that Lincoln was fully heterosexual.

Nor, it seems, did Speed. Both were interested in women, including prostitutes, and while sleeping together, each courted a woman he later married. After Speed returned to Kentucky, Lincoln's letters disclose emotional ties and shared concerns but nothing else that Tripp sought to uncover.

John Y. Simon is the editor of *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant* (Southern Illinois University Press).



Lucas E. Morel

PART OF C.A. TRIPP'S ARGUMENT IS based on Lincoln's religious beliefs. He sees Lincoln's early skepticism towards Christianity as the result of his early puberty. Lincoln experienced fewer sexual inhibitions and hence was less beholden than most boys to conventional sexual mores, and with them, conventional Biblical teachings not only about good and bad sexual practices but about "the Bible as the word of God." Tripp believes Lincoln remained a lifelong skeptic towards the Christian God, and argues that the Second Inaugural Address "amounts to a masochistic exercise of sorts," resulting from the "constant blocks, hindrances, and extreme frustrations that Lincoln sustained through the war years." How else to explain Honest Abe's "venture into a borrowed religious guilt and its image of that unforgiving God"?

Tripp argues that the "poetic benevolence" of the Second Inaugural Address's concluding paragraph ("With malice toward none, with charity for all...") has distracted scholars from examining Lincoln's "strange detour into heavy religious guilt." But here Tripp simply has not done his homework, as a review of the scholarship available to him would show. In these works he would have found enough to reconsider his intimation that the Second Inaugural is an exercise in sexual self-humiliation derived from the self-inflicted wounds of a nation at war with itself.

The Second Inaugural does represent an exercise in humility, but one involving the culpability of both North and South for slavery. True fruit in keeping with national repentance over slavery would need to take two forms: for the North, no triumphal revenge taken against their defeated Southern brethren for the evil

of slavery, inasmuch as both North and South reaped its profits; for the South, admission that slavery was an evil that came "in the providence of God" but now receives (with the North) its due retribution through "this mighty scourge of war." But that's where the guilt ends. The retribution has been paid; the scores are now settled, and it was time to bear "malice toward none" and extend "charity for all."

Tripp thought that knowing Lincoln meant getting intimate with his sexuality. But if Tripp's examination of Lincoln's religious life is any indication, *The Intimate World of Abraham Lincoln* proves that getting to know Lincoln's legacy as a statesman does not require getting intimate with him—at least not with his sex life.

Lucas E. Morel is associate professor of politics at Washington and Lee University and the author of *Lincoln's Sacred Effort: Defining Religion's Role in American Self-Government* (Lexington).



Daniel W. Stowell

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, I JOINED THE staff of the Lincoln Legal Papers in Springfield, Illinois. In doing so, I became a part of what C. A. Tripp derisively calls "the wide swath of Lincoln land," where apparently "silence is sacred" on taboo subjects such as the alleged homosexual components of Lincoln's life. This is an odd accusation, since I have found in this same company of scholars almost everything except silence. They have questioned Lincoln's honesty; his commitment to emancipation; his suppression of civil liberties; his assumption of unconstitutional authority; his treatment of his father, his wife, and his children; his concern about the plight of enslaved African-Americans; and many other attributes and actions, large and small. Many of their answers have hardly been flattering to Lincoln or to his status as an American icon.

In contrast to many of the scholars he condemns, Tripp ignores and misreads evidence and ultimately impoverishes the scholarly and public dialogue on Lincoln's life and legacy. His evidence for a homosexual relationship between Lincoln and William Greene, for instance, is based not on Greene's reminiscences (as told to William Herndon 30 years later), but on Tripp's inference that Greene was saying "much more" than Herndon understood. When there isn't enough inference to feed his argument, Tripp is happy to make do with total silence as proof. The absence, not the survival, of cor-

respondence between Elmer Ellsworth and Lincoln proves that "the bidding came round-about" through John Cook, Lincoln's "procurer." Tripp insists that Lincoln also had a homosexual relationship with fellow attorney Henry Clay Whitney, based on Whitney's statement that Lincoln "wooed me to close intimacy and familiarity." Tripp makes no effort to parse this statement; the word intimacy alone is enough to prove the existence of a homosexual relationship, even though Tripp later admits that "for whatever reason," Whitney "was careful not to reveal too much about it." The first question any Lincoln scholar would have asked Tripp is the one Tripp ought to have asked himself: is it possible that Whitney may not have revealed more because there was no more to reveal?

Daniel W. Stowell is director and editor of The Papers of Abraham Lincoln.



Michael Burlingame

INsofar as Tripp's book helps disabuse the reading public of the "legend of Lincoln's happy marriage," it serves a valuable function. But insofar as it leads people to think that Lincoln was gay it does a disservice to history, for the evidence adduced fails to support the argument. The cases of Joshua Speed and David Derickson, which Tripp dwells on at greatest length and that provide the strongest evidence for his thesis that Lincoln was "primarily homosexual," are far from conclusive.

Lincoln's letters to Speed in the 1840s, which Tripp cites as strong evidence, in fact lack a homoerotic tone. Lincoln's use of "yours forever" in letters to Speed, a phrase that Tripp finds significant, also appears in his letters to many others. In 1864, Lincoln told Titian J. Coffey that "I slept with Joshua [Speed] for four years." If Lincoln and Speed were (to use 19th-century parlance) sodomites, it seems unlikely that Lincoln would have spoken so openly to Coffey. He also acknowledged that he had slept with Charles Maltby over a long period, telling a journalist in 1863: "I know Maltby, for I slept with him six months."

Similarly, Speed informed a friend that "he and Lincoln slept together about four years." That friend also recalled that Speed said to Lincoln when they first met that he (Speed) had "been sleeping in the same bed for some time" with his partner James Bell. "He is gone now, and if you wish, you can take his place." It is doubtful that Speed would have been so open about that sleeping arrangement if he and Lincoln (or he and Bell) had been homosexual lovers.

If anything, all the real evidence we have points in precisely the opposite direction. Lincoln's law partner William Herndon alleged that from 1837 to 1842, Lincoln and Joshua Speed, "a lady's man," were "quite familiar—to go no further[—]with the women." On at least one occasion Lincoln shared Speed's taste in fancy women—in fact, the very same woman. Speed recollected that around 1839 or 1840, he "was keeping a pretty woman" in Springfield, and Lincoln, "desirous to have a little," asked his bunkmate, "do you know where I can get some." Speed replied, "Yes I do, & if you will wait a moment or so I'll send

you to the place with a note. You cant get it without a note or by my appearance." If Speed was homosexual and impotent with women, as Tripp argues, why did he keep this "pretty woman" in Springfield? If Lincoln was having sex with Speed, why would he ask him where he could "get some"?

Moreover, there is abundant credible evidence—ignored or dismissed by Tripp—that Lincoln was sexually and romantically attracted to women, four of whom he proposed to (Ann Rutledge, Mary Owens, Mary Todd, and Sarah Rickard). He was "a Man of strong passions for woman," according to his good friend David Davis. Herndon also recollected that Lincoln was "a man of terribly strong passions for women" and "could scarcely keep his hands off them." Tripp's dismissal of the testimony of more than two dozen informants in the case of Ann Rutledge contrasts sharply with his willingness to accept extremely scanty evidence to prove that Lincoln had homosexual relations with William G. Greene, Abner Y. Ellis, Horace White, Henry C. Whitney, and Elmer Ellsworth. Those highly conjectural cases do not pass the test that Tripp says he used to establish the validity of a claim: namely, at least two independent sources.

Given the paucity of hard evidence adduced by Tripp, and given the abundance of contrary evidence indicating that Lincoln was drawn romantically and sexually to some women, it is highly unlikely that Abraham Lincoln was "predominantly homosexual."

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BECOMING THE BARD

Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare,
by Stephen Greenblatt. W. W. Norton, 384 pages, \$26.95

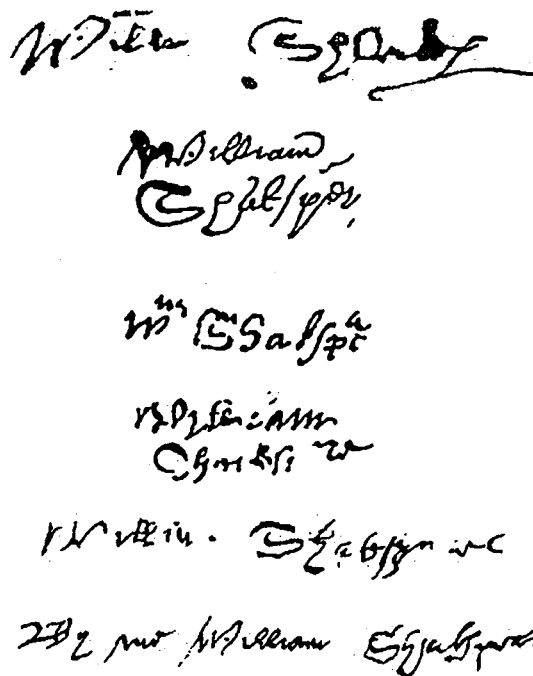
FOUR CENTURIES AND FOUR DECADES AFTER his birth, William Shakespeare not only remains the most compelling literary and cultural presence in our language but also attracts audiences and readers in the millions around the globe. Ben Jonson's eulogy in the First Folio—"He was not of an age, but for all time!"—has become prophecy rather than exaggeration, and Shakespeare's great competitor might have been astonished (and slightly chagrined) to find popular, professional, and scholarly interest in Shakespeare far more extensive today than it was in 1623. Stephen Greenblatt's latest book acknowledges this phenomenon and attempts to provide an explanation for it by investigating the relationship between Shakespeare's life and his writings:

A young man from a small provincial town—a man without independent wealth, without powerful family connections, and without a university education—moves to London in the late 1580s and, in a remarkably short time, becomes the greatest playwright not of his age alone but of all time.... How is an achievement of this magnitude to be explained? How did Shakespeare become Shakespeare?

Given the evidence of nearly unparalleled genius as a starting point, most explanations have focused narrowly upon the texts or, more broadly, upon the history of performances and audience reception rather than upon the author's own story—and for good reason.

As Greenblatt acknowledges, any attempt to account for the genius by examining the life seems futile. We have no personal letters by and almost no direct contemporary testimony about William Shakespeare—even Jonson is writing about a collection of plays, not a man. Contemporary written records (including a mere six signatures by Shakespeare) consist of real estate transactions and other legal documents to which the playwright was a party. Shakespeare left no commentary upon any of his plays and didn't even bother to publish them before his death. The only surviving personal document of any length is his will; the only substantial document written in his own hand may be a small portion of *Sir Thomas More*, a play with three co-authors that was probably never produced on stage. But no one is sure when Shakespeare's portion may have been

written, and a minority of scholars deny that Shakespeare wrote it at all. Shakespeare probably attended Stratford Grammar School, but there are no surviving records from that period. The birth of his twins Judith and Hamnet was recorded in Stratford in 1585, and in 1592 he was attacked in print as a successful London playwright by the dying Robert Greene: between those two notices, there are no records at all of the activities of William Shakespeare. Given all that we know about his works and the



The surviving authenticated signatures of William Shakespeare

very little that we know about his extra-theatrical life, therefore, attempting to interpret the former by looking at the latter would seem to be not only futile but wrongheaded.

A BIOGRAPHICAL INTERPRETATION OF Shakespeare's works seems particularly unexpected coming from Stephen Greenblatt. As godfather of the literary-cultural practice known as "New Historicism," General Editor of the *Norton Shakespeare*, and the subject of a collection of his own writings just published by Blackwell (*The Greenblatt Reader*), he has perhaps no equal within the American Shakespeare industry. Yet his own work and that of Renaissance literary critics over the past two decades has tended to efface the authority of individual writers or at least subordinate it to the influence of cultural practices, ideologi-

cal discourse, and the requirements of language itself. At the end of *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (1980), Greenblatt (presumably speaking for all of us) labeled as an "illusion" the notion that "I am the principal maker of my own identity." More recently, he identified what he subtitled three "Portrait[s] of the Playwright as a Young Provincial" in his General Introduction to the *Norton Shakespeare* (1997) as examples of "the biographical daydreams that modern scholarship is supposed to have rendered forever obsolete."

Each of Greenblatt's own "biographical daydreams" is grounded upon documents identifying John Shakespeare, the playwright's father, as an important public official in the borough of Stratford-upon-Avon and as a Roman Catholic recusant, and each imagines hypothetical scenes that Shakespeare may have experienced as a boy and adolescent: civil ceremonies in Stratford, a Royal Progress and Parliamentary election in Warwickshire, an exorcism in a Catholic household in 1580. Each anticipates both the method and the material that Greenblatt employs in *Will in the World*: "To understand who Shakespeare was, it is important to follow the verbal traces he left behind back into the life he lived and into the world to which he was so open. And to understand how Shakespeare used his imagination to transform his life into his art, it is important to use our own imagination."

WHATEVER HIS PROFESSIONAL DIScomfort with such fantasies, *Will in the World* is Greenblatt's most readable and most engaging book to date. Yet it could not have been written without the more than two decades of literary and historical scholarship preceding it, not to mention the assumptions and methodology of that scholarship. Despite its intimations of Schopenhauer, Greenblatt's punning title is resolutely down-to-earth and circumstantial, as is his portrait of the author. One of the book's major themes is also the title of his final chapter: "The Triumph of the Everyday." Shakespeare may have been the greatest dramatist of all time, but neither he nor his works ever repudiated or severed their connection with Stratford, the playwright's first and final home. Shakespeare's lack of university education or foreign travel is among the claims offered by those who doubt his authorship of the plays; Greenblatt not only acknowledges but celebrates Will's connection with his homely roots and thereby provides

ironically appropriate (if unneeded) dismissal of anti-Stratfordian skepticism.

Greenblatt's excavation of the texts for biographically significant words, images, and references is nearly always persuasive, often inviting him to posit plausible real-life experiences that Shakespeare later revised and transmuted in the plays. For example, Greenblatt imagines the 11-year-old boy accompanying his father, then a local notable, to the entertainments associated with Elizabeth's celebrated Progress to Kenilworth Castle, twelve miles northeast of Stratford, where he might have viewed for the first time the monarch in whose reign he flourished as a playwright. About 20 years later, a graceful compliment to the Virgin Queen in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* almost certainly recalls that earlier appearance. Greenblatt imagines Shakespeare (June 1594) at the execution of Roderigo Lopez, the Queen's one-time personal physician and a Jewish convert to Protestantism (*The Merchant of Venice*); Shakespeare (August 1596) at the funeral of his only son Hamnet (*Hamlet*); Shakespeare (August 1605) watching a theatrical performance by three schoolboys dressed like prophetesses welcoming King James during his first visit to Oxford (*Macbeth*). Greenblatt always acknowledges that these and other imagined scenes from the life are speculative, but in instances such as the Kenilworth celebration he notes that detailed contemporary accounts were available to Shakespeare whether or not he had been present. In other cases, he draws upon nonliterary documents (e.g., King James's *Daemonologie* and other late 16th-century accounts of witchcraft), contemporary testimony and anecdotes, and a variety of actions and persons drawn from cultural, social, and political events during Shakespeare's lifetime.

Shakespeare may indeed be a writer "for all time," but Jonson would not have denied that he was also "of an age," and that age is often the most compelling subject of Greenblatt's book. Far from golden, Shakespeare's age is here an anxious and oppressive era of persecutions, executions, and official and popular paranoia and xenophobia. "London was a nonstop theater of punishments," according to Greenblatt, and Shakespeare's plays often re-circulate and exorcise contemporary anxieties imaginatively.

THE PLAYWRIGHT'S OWN ANXIETIES are presented in *Will in the World* as a product of ideological as well as personal circumstances. Greenblatt classifies them as social, religious and sexual, and interweaves them throughout his account of the life and the works. His conclusions are as firm as they are speculative. Shakespeare's marriage to Anne Hathaway was not happy, he concludes. Symptoms of this dissatisfaction include the curious absence of mothers and wives and paucity

of happy marriages in the plays, the removal of Shakespeare's married life and disgust with his own sexuality in *The Sonnets*, anxieties about pre-marital sex in the late plays, the virtual erasure of his wife from his will and other legal documents at the end of his life, and his living apart from her during virtually all of his professional life. The greatest writer of romantic comedy in English, and one of the greatest love poets, apparently limited himself to celebrating the joys and frustrations of desire.

Greenblatt not only accepts the authenticity of John Shakespeare's final Roman Catholic spiritual testament (found in the Henley Street house only in 1757) but is also drawn to accept whatever evidence is available that Shakespeare (as "William Shakeshafte") worked in northwest England as a private tutor within wealthy Catholic households in the early 1580s before returning to Stratford and impregnating Anne Hathaway in the summer of 1582. That Shakespeare's father was a secret Catholic and that his son may initially have been raised in the old faith and taught by Catholic schoolteachers prompts an illuminating and gripping account of the persecution and execution of recusant Catholics following Elizabeth's excommunication in 1570 and the Jesuit mission of 1580. The torture, mutilation, execution, and public display of the severed heads of Lancashire and Warwickshire Catholics who might have been connected with Shakespeare and his family is a fact; the pro-Catholic sympathies of some Stratford Town Council members in the 1560s and 1570s is a likelihood; a personal encounter between Shakespeare and Edmund Campion, the Jesuit martyr who was circulating among the Catholic households in Lancashire that employed "Shakeshafte," is one of Greenblatt's fantasies. Nonetheless, his well-grounded historical sleuthing is used persuasively (if hypothetically) to account for significant effects upon the writer and his works: obliteration of any traces of religious or political beliefs in the personal effects, obfuscation or elimination of such beliefs in the plays, and Shakespeare's ability in the plays both to occupy and to question all absolutist positions.

Ultimately, it is Shakespeare's dream of advancement beyond the limits of his social station that Greenblatt focuses on most steadily in *Will in the World*. The son's unimaginable ascent in the 1590s (and thereafter) trumped the father's temporary rise in the 1560s but also enabled John Shakespeare's public reputation to be redeemed. The one-time Stratford bailiff's application for a gentleman's coat of arms, set aside by the College of Heralds after his public reversal of fortunes in the 1570s, was renewed in 1596 and approved through the efforts of someone with the wealth, status, and connections to arrange for such instant ennobling. Greenblatt fol-

lows the scholarly consensus in identifying Will Shakespeare as his father's proxy, but he also connects the family fortunes and Shakespeare's own aspirations with a variety of his professional and personal characteristics: patterns of destitution and restoration in the plays, the poet's personal parsimony and his ambitious projects to buy or lease real estate in and around Stratford from 1597 onward, even his early retirement as a Warwickshire squire, a "wealthy man with many investments," after 1610.

SOME OF GREENBLATT'S SPECULATIONS will doubtless offend bardolaters or displease scholars less willing than he to invent scenarios or discover anxieties not evident in the documentary record. His often unflattering Will may seem mean-spirited coming from one who has profited so handsomely from his love of Shakespeare. Although Greenblatt shares Park Honan's assumption that documents, like lives, cannot be properly understood apart from the world that lends them meaning, *Will in the World* does not provide the "continuous factual account" of Shakespeare's life and works called for by Honan in his 1998 biography, which remains the authoritative life. Except for Greenblatt's valuable (though occasionally opaque) discussion of how Shakespeare came to use "strategic opacity" to represent psychic inwardness in *Hamlet* and the plays that followed, there is virtually no discussion of Shakespeare's development as a writer. Some speculations (e.g., Shakespeare's father had a drinking problem and was one of the sources for Falstaff; Campion's evasion of the authorities is reflected in Edgar's shifts as Poor Tom) seem unnecessary as well as overly speculative.

Taken all in all, however, *Will in the World* exemplifies what Greenblatt himself calls "the special delight Shakespeare bestows on everything." Vividly and lucidly written, it shows off New Historicist scholarship and criticism at its best. In particular, the chapters on *The Merchant of Venice*, *Hamlet*, and *Macbeth* offer important, original, and accessible interpretations of these plays, and Greenblatt provides a compelling account of Shakespeare's relationship with the brilliant but short-lived generation of Elizabethan playwrights whom he transcended (Robert Greene is another of his sources for Falstaff). Keats's reflection in one of his letters that "Shakespeare led a life of Allegory: his works are the comments on it" necessarily must govern any attempt to pluck out the heart of William Shakespeare's own mystery. *Will in the World* offers its readers a successful imaginative account that is about as tangible and substantial as they can have any right to expect.

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LOST IN TRANSLATION

The Poetry of Petrarch, translated by David Young.
Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 320 pages, \$30.00 (cloth), \$15.00 (paper)



IT MUST HAVE BEEN FRUSTRATING, THE JOB of Chief of Italian Poetry in the decades after the death of Dante. The more so if, like Francis Petrarch (1304-1374), you were a man of immense ambition, broad learning, experience in the turbid and treacherous politics of your day, and genius enough to understand the all-inclusive intricacy of Dante's *Comedy*—but not genius enough to match it.

The great poet casts his shadow over Petrarch's entire career, and Petrarch himself was canny enough to use it to his own advantage by writing at crosscurrents to Dante. If Dante fell enamored of a mysterious young lady named Beatrice, "the blessed one," and wove that young love into poems exploring the relationship between human desire and that "Love that moves the sun and the other stars," then Petrarch in turn fell enamored of a mysterious young lady, Laura, suggesting the laurel wreath that garlands the brow of the poet Petrarch longed to become. If Dante's *La Vita Nuova*—literally, "The New Life," or "The Strange New Life"—dramatizes first the youthful narrator's error or wandering, and later, after the death of Beatrice, his suddenly awakened insight into the true nature of the Lord whose name is Love, then Petrarch must organize his *Rime Sparse*—literally "Scattered Rhymes," as of seed, or frivolous things to toss aside—from the point of view of an old man who knows what his great mistake was, but who lacks the will, on his own, to retrace his steps. Dante's

Comedy is structured by the eternal harmonies of God Himself and the cosmos He has created. Petrarch's 366 *Rime* are structured rather by the fleet passage of time, covering a year and a day, yet ever beneath the judgment of that eternity from which time derives its being and meaning.

If Petrarch sounds like the medieval poet he was, rather than the weepy love poet later generations took him for, that is right and just. Renaissance sonneteers like Sir Philip Sidney and Edmund Spenser, 200 years later, may well have made sport of some of the sillier Petrarchan motifs (like burning in ice and freezing in fire), but they understood all along that the old Florentine was never to be identified simply with his poetic narrator. They saw, too, that the *Rime* was not a collection of poems but a unified work, a single poem that one could not interpret outside of the Christian context. This is why the cornerstone poem in Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella*, the Seventh Song, celebrates the glory of a wise foolishness, for the wisdom of the world is foolishness to God. It is also why, in his *Amoretti*, Spenser continues his central block of poems to correspond with the 47 days of Lent and Holy Week, ending with an Easter poem of calm and impressive power: "Most glorious Lord of life, that on this day / Didst make thy triumph over death and sin" (68.1-2). They must have noted, though it remains a tantalizing mystery why none of the poets after Dante ever bothered to explain these things explicitly,

that Petrarch's 263 poems *in vita di Laura* (that is, during Laura's life) correspond to 263 days beginning with April 6, the traditional date of the original Good Friday, with day 264 (the first poem *in morte di Laura*) landing on December 25, Christmas Day. Not to put too fine a point on it, the poetry of Laura is born on the day Christ dies, and it becomes a poetry of Laura's death on the day Christ is born.

What we are to make of these theological and amatory fabrics is one thing; but that we are to make *something* of them is certain. In short, you cannot interpret or translate Petrarch as if he were merely a modern man who had managed to shake free of the bulky, many-dimensional chrysalis of the medieval cosmos to flit along in our subjectivist world of three dimensions, me, myself, and I. You have to have an ear for theology and Scripture, not to mention Dante, and when you are translating you have to ensure that the echoes are heard. The task as I see it is not to make Petrarch familiar to us, but to familiarize us with him: to encourage us to look upon his work with wonder, inasmuch as it is rich and strange.

THAT IS NOT THE TASK THAT DAVID Young sets for himself in his translation. Granted, the consensus among translators these days is turning noticeably conservative, so that Young himself wishes "to stay close to Petrarch's diction, syntax, and

tone, not wishing to impose my own sensibility or vocabulary on what was so well thought out and so remarkably consistent in the first place." And in large part Young is the faithful translator he wants to be. He also lends Petrarch's poetry a good deal of the freshness, perhaps even the breeziness, of our modern idiom, which is also his aim, and an entirely defensible one. Translators should not sound like Harriet Beecher Stowe. Thus if you read Young's translation you will never be presented with things that Petrarch did not say, or brazen attempts to distort what he said. You will always be reading poems that make syntactical and intellectual sense, and that, all in all, move pretty swiftly and are pleasurable to read. Those are considerable merits. But you will not be getting Petrarch's heart.

For when it comes to Christianity, Young is simply tone-deaf. His introduction asserts the facile, false dichotomy between earthly love and heavenly love; between earthly beauty and heavenly beauty. How can anyone with a passing knowledge of Scripture, of medieval art, of Thomas Aquinas, or of Augustine's famous distinction between *caritas* and *cupiditas*, write the following?

Cupid might be thought of as the personified equivalent of some of our modern ideas about biological imperatives and sex drives. He undermines self-control, and he blinds us to larger realities by dominating our senses. A pagan presence in a Christian poem, he is a powerful contradiction to the way that the Church says the world is supposed to work.

Cupid had been plying his bow and arrow for centuries in Christian poetry, without necessarily becoming a "pagan presence"—unless cupidity is peculiarly pagan. On the contrary, "the Church" (and what the Church has to do institutionally with this matter, I have no idea) had long said that cupidity was just the thing that made the world go round: the world of sin, that is, the City of Man, characterized by its *cupiditas*, its lust for domination and possession. Nor is cupidity defined by its object: I can be in the grip of "Cupid" due either to my lust for glory or for gain; and I can love charitably by looking with eyes of heavenly as well as perfectly earthly desire upon the beauty of the woman I am to marry. Spenser, whose riff on Petrarch ends in the joy of a wedding day (and wedding night), thus happily names his sonnet sequence *Amoretti*, after a multitude of little Cupids.

I spend some time on the matter of theology because it shows where Young succeeds and where he falls short. Let us look at one of Young's favorites, sonnet 189:

*Passa la nave mia colma d'oblio
per aspro mare a mezza notte il verno
enfra Scilla e Caribdi, et al governo
siede 'l signore anzi 'l nemico mio;*

*a ciascun remo un pensier pronto et rio
che la tempesta e 'l fin par ch' abbi a scherno;
la vela rompe un vento umido eterno
di sospir, di speranze et di disio;
pioggia di lagrimar, nebbia di sdegni
bagna et rallenta le gia stanche sarte
che son d'error con ignoranza attorto.*

*Celansi i duo mei dolci usati segni,
morta fra l'onde e la ragion et l'arte
tal ch' i' 'ncomincio a desperar del porto.*

My galley, loaded with forgetfulness,
rolls through rough seas, at midnight,
during winter,
aiming between Charybdis and sharp
Scylla;
my lord, ah no, my foe, sits at the
tiller;

each oar is wielded by a quick, mad
thought
that seems to scorn the storm and
what it means;
an endless wind of moisture, of deep
sighs,
of hopes and passions, rips the sail in
half;

tears in a steady downpour, mists of
hate,
are loosening and soaking all the
ropes,
ropes made of ignorance, tangled up
with error.

The two sweet stars I steer by are ob-
scured;
reason and skill are dead amid the
waves;
and I don't think I'll ever see the port.

Some of the lines pack a nice punch. I especially like "the two sweet stars I steer by" and the quick violence of "rips the sail in half." What's missing? Let us look at the version by Mark Musa (1996):

My ship full of forgetful cargo sails
through rough seas at the midnight of a
winter
between Charybdis and the Scylla reef,
my master, no, my foe, is at the helm;

at each oar sits a quick and insane thought
that seems to scorn the storm and what it

brings;
the sail, by wet eternal winds of sighs,
of hopes and of desires blowing, breaks;

a rain of tears, a mist of my disdain
washes and frees those all too weary ropes
made up of wrong entwined with igno-
rance.

Hidden are those two trusty signs of mine;
dead in the waves is reason as is skill,
and I despair of ever reaching port.

The crucial word in the poem is *desperar*, to lose hope, to despair. It is ineluctably theological. No reader in Petrarch's day could have missed its implication of eternal loss. It is not simply that the speaker of the poem is losing hope that his love for Laura will ever be requited; it is that he is losing hope of ever knowing the true way of Love at all. Hence the language of the poem suggests that a soul conscious of its sin has made of itself a ship that is not seaworthy: its very ropes are "made up of wrong"; the "eternal winds of sighs" echo the tempest-blown wailing of the lustful in *Inferno* 5; the despair at the end echoes the despair of Dante's persona at the beginning of the *Inferno*, when he is so faced down by the beasts that he "lost all hope to gain the mountain-top." Thomas Bergin's old-fashioned translation renders the last line with theological and dramatic, if not literal, accuracy: "What hope of harbor now? I cry in terror." The *fin* of the tempest—"what it brings," says Musa with a muted hint of eternal loss; "what it means," says Young with no hint of that at all; "the end," says Robert Durling (prose translation, 1976)—is either death or the purpose for which tempests have been raised. A dangerous thing, indeed, to scorn both. Young does not catch the hint.

THE FAILURE TO REGISTER
Christianity is like removing the bass line from a Bach fugue; whole poems seem thinner and flatter for it. Take, for instance, the poem describing Petrarch's first sight of Laura, sonnet 3:

*Era il giorno ch' al sol si scoloraro
per la pieta del suo fattore i rai
quando i' fui preso, et non me ne guardai,
che i be' vostr' occhi, Donna, mi legaro.*

*Tempo non mi pareo di far riparo
contr' a' colpi d'Amor; pero m'andai
secur, senza sospetto, onde i miei guai
nel commune dolor s'incominciaro.*

*Trovommi Amor del tutto disarmato,
et aperta la via per gli occhi al core*

che di lagrime son fatti uscio et varco.
Pero al mio parer non li fu onore
ferir me de saetta in quello stato,
a voi armata non mostrar pur l'arco.

It was the day the sun himself grew pale
with grieving for his Maker—I was seized
and made no effort to defend myself;
your lovely eyes had held and bound me,
Lady.

It didn't seem a time to be on guard
against Love's blows, so I went confident
and fearless on my way. My troubles
started
amid the universal sense of woe.

Love found me wholly undefended, with
the way from eyes to heart completely
open,
eyes that are now the conduit for tears.

He got no glory by it; I was helpless.
And he let you escape with no attack
when you were well defended, fully
armed.

As poetry it's not at all bad. I like the clipped, terse comment of line 12, and the sonorous and ominous final phrase, "fully armed." But "the universal sense of woe"? That is simply not what Petrarch wants the reader to be thinking about. It is not a "sense" of woe, but woe itself, and it is something other than universal. It is "common," that is, shared acutely by every man and woman who ever lived. Woe is our common lot, because sin is our common state. The speaker simply refuses to understand it. He says, "It wasn't fair, Love, that you attacked me on Good Friday, because I was distracted, not paying attention to you," when in fact the very meaning of Good Friday ought to have armed him. He was not, as Young says, "helpless." Musa is more

accurate in rendering Petrarch's shading away from the point of view of the speaker: his line 12 repeats the key word "seems" from line 5: "It seems to me it did him little honor."

The reader may notice strong similarities among the translations. Consider the opening stanza of poem 22, a lovely sestina and the first poem in Petrarch's sequence that departs from the sonnet form. I will give three English versions:

For any animal that lives on earth,
except for those few made to hate the
sun,
the time for toil is while it still is day;
but then when heaven lights up all its
stars
some go back home while some nest in
the wood
to find their rest at least until the dawn.

For any animal who dwells on earth,
(except those few who hate to be in sun),
the time for labor is throughout the day;
but then when Heaven kindles all its
stars
some go back home, some nest within the
forest
and take their rest at least until the
dawn.

To any animal that dwells on earth,
Except for but a few that hate the sun,
Is given time to toil till close of day;
But as soon as the sky lights up the stars
Some return home and some hide in the
wood
To find a rest at least until the dawn.

Now, since a sestina's lines must end in key words repeated from stanza to stanza, it is not entirely surprising that these versions should be

so similar. Yet it is also hard, then, to make a case for a new version. The first is Musa's, the second Young's, the third, by Anna Maria Ascoli (1946). They are all fine translations. I could quibble here and there: all three miss the allusion to Francesca's speech in *Inferno* 5, where *animal* clearly means "living soul"—thus Petrarch is not speaking merely about what we call animals, but about the nature of living things generally to seek the light. Young and Ascoli are nearer the mark with "dwells" than is Musa with "lives," and yet Young chooses ill in departing from Ascoli and Musa in translating the Italian *selva* as "forest." The word must retain its associations with subhumanity, wilderness, savagery—what Dante was thinking when he used it at the beginning of the *Inferno*. For we are here entering Petrarch's dark wood, his terrible wilderness.

IT IS HARD TO CATCH THE SHADOWS OF that wilderness, for Petrarch's is an elusive voice, at once plaintive and self-mocking, brooding and whimsical, misty and theologically acute. I think he is more difficult to translate than Dante, not because his poetry possesses greater intricacy (no one is more of a Gothic architect than Dante), but because of his habit of requiring the reader to distinguish between shadow and shadow. No one that I have read has translated him poorly—far from it. But neither has anyone quite caught the flickers of intense light and the deep tremolos of darkness that suddenly interrupt them. But then to quote Petrarch himself, our life is short, and our native powers unfit for so high an enterprise. Young's translation pleases, but remains within the fold.

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LUSTING AFTER WISDOM

Heloise & Abelard: A New Biography, by James Burge.
HarperSan Francisco, 336 pages, \$24.95



FLESHLY LOVE, PHILOSOPHERS HAVE taught, coexists uneasily with love of truth. Arch-idealist Plato explicated this thesis most fully, but perhaps unique among philosophic theories, it has also found empirical confirmation in the lives of the philosophers themselves. Take a roll call of the great philosophers and you find that nearly all of them—Plato, St. Augustine, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Kant, Nietzsche, Wittgenstein, to name a few—were bachelors.

Yet the history of philosophy does furnish at least one great earthly love affair: Peter Abelard and Heloise. Abelard found in Heloise a woman whose dialectic talents equaled and quite possibly even surpassed his own. He discovered in a more than metaphorical sense that Truth, as Nietzsche once sardonically put it, is a woman. In Abelard and Heloise, mind and body could meet at last.

Popular imagination has raised Abelard and Heloise to the empyrean heights of Western literature's great lovers. Their names stand alongside Romeo and Juliet, Antony and Cleopatra, Dante and Beatrice, and Dido and Aeneas as matchless examples of erotic love. No mere fabulist could produce a more fascinating and sometimes shocking union. Even philosophers—nay, especially philosophers—will find their story illuminating.

The plot goes like this: Abelard, having attained a reputation as a great logician and *enfant terrible*, arrives in Paris to claim the exalted post of master of the school of Notre Dame. The year is 1114, and Abelard is in his thirties. He

boards with Fulbert, a church canon, who employs him to tutor his niece Heloise, a woman of fantastic learning and, we find out, appetite. When they're not discussing the Universals, the two are making love—or, for all we know, doing both at once.

Alas, for them the world of brute experience intrudes in the form of pregnancy. Abelard removes Heloise to his family in Brittany, and, to placate her uncle, agrees to marry her secretly. (Were news of the marriage to leak out, his career would be ruined.) Heloise vehemently opposes the marriage—their love should not bow to convention, and besides, "Who can concentrate on scripture and philosophy and be able to endure babies crying, nurses soothing them with lullabies, and all the noisy coming and going of men and women about the house?" Yet she consents.

When rumors of their marriage spread, Heloise denies them. An enraged Fulbert dispatches henchmen who seize Abelard at night and castrate him. (This is not a story for the faint of heart.)

Following this humiliation, Abelard convinces Heloise—again, she is opposed—that they should both enter religious orders. Heloise becomes a famous and celebrated abbess, though we know from her letters that she remained unapologetically loyal first to Abelard and the love they shared, and only second to God. Abelard becomes a monk but continues his philosophical pursuits. Ultimately, Rome condemns Abelard for heresy, and he throws himself on the limitless mercy of Peter the

Venerable, abbot of the great monastic empire of Cluny.

AND SO THE UNION OF MIND AND BODY in this tale, unlike that of Ovid's Cupid and Psyche, ends in tragedy. Nonetheless, while it lasted, their lovemaking reached such heights as to become a fleshly representation of Plato's communion with the forms. To tell their story well requires deep literary gifts; happily, James Burge's engaging and sprightly new biography does them justice.

The Dutch historian Johan Huizinga warned in his famous study of the late Middle Ages that historians who rely on official documents rather than less reliable but more colorful personal chronicles fall into the "dangerous error" of forgetting "the fervent pathos of medieval life." Burge, a producer and director for the BBC and a columnist for *The Independent*, avoids this error by taking advantage of a newly-discovered trove of love letters which some scholars believe to be authored by Abelard and Heloise. The result is a personal and engaging tale, showing the two in high relief, and communicating to the reader the "fervent pathos" of their lives and times.

Until recently, scholars had only Abelard's philosophical treatises, his 20,000-word autobiographical "History of my Calamities," and a handful of letters between the lovers. But in 1999, after a decade of study, Australian scholar Constant Mews published translations of 113 new letters or parts of letters that he argued were authored by the two lovers. Not everyone

agrees, and their authenticity will probably be disputed long into the future.

But that shouldn't stop us from having fun with them, and that is precisely what Burge does here. Exploring the human, intellectual, and political contours of this remarkable story, he draws on new and old sources and—perhaps too often, at least for my taste—his own speculation about what they and their fellows were thinking and feeling. (Burge goes overboard, for instance, when he attributes Fulbert's rage to his own sexual attraction to his niece. Isn't it enough that Abelard has deflowered Heloise and defiled Fulbert's house by carrying on a rather public love affair under his roof?)

Aside from that minor indulgence, however, Burge's account is enjoyable and enlightening. He savors the perennial modernism of these two lives, and obviously enjoys communicating it to the reader.

Abelard and Heloise inhabited a world that, like our own, was changing rapidly. They saw themselves and their times as modern. The 12th century, rather than a "middle" age between times of greater cultural achievement, was in fact a time of fantastic intellectual and cultural ferment.

"Abelard and Heloise saw the age in which they lived as almost bewilderingly modern," writes Burge, "a time when new ideas and new things were changing the world at a dizzying speed. They were at the beginning of something, not the middle." Indeed, there is no better proof of their awareness than the unusual

name they chose for their son: Astralabe. The latest in scientific technology at the time, the astrolabe was used to follow the movements of the sun, moon, and stars. "They prided themselves on their rational understanding of the world," explains Burge. "Just as the astrolabe was a physical sign of the possibility of understanding through reason, the child was a physical expression of their love."

With so much possibility in the offing—only years after Abelard's death, the trickle of Greek scientific and philosophical texts into France on which he subsisted would grow to a veritable torrent—the authorities of the old order inevitably grew anxious. The sacred now faced serious competition from the profane, a rivalry that remains at the heart of the Western tradition.

Abelard didn't see the conflict in this way, however. Finding much truth in Greek philosophy, he civilized or Christianized it, arguing for instance that Plato was a proto-Christian. (The reader will recall that Dante placed the pagan philosophers Plato and Aristotle not in hell but in Limbo, the benign first circle.) Philosophy and religion share a common goal, he believed, and a religion that shied away from rational inquiry in favor of fideism was in danger of straying from Truth.

For this, and for treating the Scriptures and Church Fathers with the disinterested eye of the logician rather than the reverence of the believer (which he was), Abelard earned the enmity of some prominent Church leaders.

MANY ADMIRERS IDEALIZE ABELARD and Heloise's fearless flouting of convention. But surely the suffering they endured counsels a more modest moral to their story. Although we cannot know what befell them in the afterlife, they certainly didn't get away with their scandalous behavior—which included making love in a convent refectory—on this side of paradise. Heloise, it is true, was unrepentant to the end, but Abelard seems to have understood his "calamities" as just punishment for his sins.

Burge includes an appendix with excerpts from the newly-discovered letters. Tantalizing for all admirers of the two lovers, the letters belie the typical view of Latin as a dry and dead tongue. Observe the passion and sensitivity of these closing lines: The woman writes, "*Vale, cor et corpus meum, et omnia dilectio mea*" ("Farewell, my heart and body and my total love"); the man replies, "*Vale dulcissima*" ("Farewell, sweetest").

As 12th-century Christian philosophers go, Abelard hasn't fared too badly. Unlike Hugh of St. Victor and Roscelin, his name has not died, suggesting that if you go in for a school of philosophy that will be entirely ignored 900 years down the road, it's best to complement it with a steamy love life so that at least the literature departments will pay attention to you.

It's a good lesson, but one few philosophers will ever learn.

Sarah Bramwell is a freelance writer living in New York City.

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READING HEIDEGGER

The Essence of Human Freedom: An Introduction to Philosophy, by Martin Heidegger,
translated by Ted Sadler. Continuum, 240 pages, \$39.95 (paper)

The Essence of Truth: On Plato's Parable of the Cave and the Theatetus, by Martin Heidegger,
translated by Ted Sadler. Continuum, 272 pages, \$120.00 (cloth), \$39.95 (paper)

IT IS ONLY A SMALL EXAGGERATION TO SAY that each of Martin Heidegger's works seems to be the key to his thought. On reflection, none is as comprehensive and few as complex as *Being and Time* (1927). But for a reader attuned to Heidegger, every book is bracing and magnetic. In this allure Heidegger's writings and lectures remind us of Plato's dialogues, each of which appears to be the clue to the others.

One reason for this impression is that Heidegger's discussions are searching, relentless, and acute; he leads us forward with little rest to what seems both novel and inevitable. Another reason, perhaps a deeper and in any event a related one, is that Heidegger's arguments seek what he calls in *The Essence of Human Freedom* both the root of things and the whole of things. The works—and the academic courses from which most of his posthumous publications derive, including these two, based on lectures he delivered in the early 1930s—attempt to unearth the root challenge of philosophical thinking in the individual student and reader while also clarifying the genuine matters about which one should be reflecting. The effect (although not the content or result) is similar to what we see in the best political philosophy. Being stirred to think is as important as the question being thought about.

Heidegger not only encourages thought, he also instructs us in how to begin thinking. He does not offer a method in the sense of a methodology, a secure series of steps with no risk, but a method in the sense of a way and direction, a path or paths to what is ever wider and deeper, with one's own convictions and powers challenged if one is to stay the course. Still another feature of his way is to combine direct attention to the problems he confronts (and to the reader who faces up to these problems) with intense discussions of previous thinkers.

As with all thinkers of rank, Heidegger strips from serious students the illusion of competence. One must face the daunting fact that it is difficult or indeed impossible to measure up. Fortunately, what is daunting can not only depress and discombobulate but also inspire and shape. Heidegger at his best calls forth what

once was called courage of the intellect.

Heidegger sees his characteristic path in *The Essence of Human Freedom* and *The Essence of Truth* as grounded in and circling back to history. He does not, however, grasp history as one ensnaring net after another that traps us all in sociological or temporal relativism. History stands instead for the fact that what we uncover in our thoughts and deeds must be rooted in the free events and occasions through which they happen or occur. The ground of possibility for these actions is the complex of



dispositions, entanglements, and understandings that Heidegger outlines in *Being and Time*. These defining elements of human being exist "historically" because we are always ahead of ourselves. We always have our own being to be ("be yourself" is not easy or simple advice), and in the light of our projections we find ourselves to have already been thrown into this world and these dispositions, thrown as just the ones we are who exist presently in the midst of the things with which we deal. Our freedom and our characteristics, our individuality, are "temporal" in their basis.

MAN'S TEMPORAL OR HISTORICAL essence sets Heidegger's intellectual direction in two ways. One is to attend to the experience of his own activities (and to call on us to attend to ours), including especially those involved in his current search, and to dig deeper and deeper into these experiences, to see them more and more for what they are apart from everyday views and ordinary

philosophic opinion. In *The Essence of Truth*, for example, he examines carefully what truly is happening when we see colors or hear sounds. There is nothing in what he uncovers that one cannot see for oneself. Unless one looks for oneself, however, one will not experience the acuity of Heidegger's analysis. Similarly, he argues that we cannot understand Kant's notion of the factuality of the moral *ought*, the moral law, pure practical reason, freedom in will-governed action, except as we attend to what occurs in our actual willing. Philosophy must be renewed again and again by and for oneself.

The second way is to see that the ground of his and our quest to grasp freedom or truth as they truly are is shared with the great thinkers of the "past." As we have said, Heidegger characteristically combines direct attention to problems and to readers as possibly facing up to these problems with intense discussions of previous thinkers. They are in fact not past in the sense of done and gone because philosophy unlike science is not the progressive accumulation of true statements. Nor are they past in the sense of over with, because our attempt to understand begins from the problems and comprehension that we have inherited. Our own effort to understand in turn illuminates these thinkers by allowing us to confront them on their own terms. The more acute our own projection, the more acute the confrontation: the more that can be learned from and about the thinkers and the issues they consider. Indeed, it may prove (Heidegger concludes it does prove) that we see more clearly than they the land on which they were traveling as they captured the things they comprehended. At the same time, we see how we ourselves begin from some version of their views, versions, as it happens, that today are far more remote from the true source of understanding than their own.

Heidegger's students and his students' students frequently follow his footsteps in rote and unilluminating ways. They take for granted his core historical understanding. They act as if being and man's free openness to it must function as Heidegger says and have been discovered truly once and for all. They reduce previous thinkers to unthinking pawns in an inevitable

march to the contemporary nihilistic oblivion of being. They act as if there is nothing to learn from them, only things to learn (or not even to learn but simply to say) about them.

Heidegger himself, however, especially up through his lectures on Nietzsche in the 1930s, follows his two directions more fruitfully and more faithfully. In the two works we are discussing, for example, he seeks genuinely to see how Plato and Aristotle understood truth and being, and how Kant understood freedom, and he presses forward more directly to a look at the phenomena themselves. Nonetheless, he presses along a path previously cleared in *Being and Time* and although he seeks to comprehend the thinkers he also develops what he thinks must be the limits to their views, limits he clearly already (in 1930-1932 when he gave these two courses) believes in advance that he will find. Philosophical "controversy does not mean...criticizing and contradicting. Instead, it is a bringing back of the other, and thereby also of oneself, to what is primary and originary.... Philosophical controversy is interpretation as destruction."

The upshot of this duality—cultivation of the beautiful flower but only or primarily as it is rooted in a soil it does not understand—is that Heidegger's study of others is restricted. He does not follow with any rigor the authors' practical or rhetorical intention in dealing with their audience. He does not usually discuss whole books from beginning to end. He does not even exhaustively situate the passages that concern him within such wholes. On the other hand, he often is quite alive to education within Plato's dialogues (here, for example, the education of Theatetus), sometimes discusses complete works (Plato's *Sophist*, Schelling's *Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*), and usually analyzes large and coherent sections of the authors he examines (here the *Republic's* cave allegory, the central section of Plato's *Theatetus*, and the third antinomy of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*). Heidegger takes what he believes to be the central discussions that clarify a thinker's understanding of an important topic and addresses these arguments relentlessly. Such passages also often show especially well what he thinks the thinker takes for granted. In Heidegger these demonstrations never reduce the thinker to some supposed race, class, or gender blindside; or take him to task for having ignored an arbitrarily inflated construct. Heidegger's literary deconstructions should not be identified with the bogus deconstructions of academics who (un)consciously or (dis)honestly huddle behind his shield. Rather, he shows how thinkers implicitly draw upon and look past a realm that makes possible the height and power of their own endeavors. Plato's thoughts about false

opinion, for example, draw from, and yet overlook and even begin to drive from sight, truth understood as beings revealed in their unhiddenness rather than truth understood as it is now, namely correct propositions that correspond to their objects.

HEIDEGGER'S PROCEDURE FOR DEALING with other thinkers yields four characteristic results. Most obviously, his care in reading together with his gifts and ability to use his own understanding of phenomena result in deep insight. When he



considers Kant's view of freedom in *The Essence of Human Freedom*, for example, he is able to differentiate and then to connect Kant's two views of freedom, the first essentially related to the problem of causality and the second essentially tied to the problem of human will and practical action. As part of his analysis he also subjects the split between positive and negative freedom to careful scrutiny. One would be hard pressed to find a better discussion of Kant (or of this hackneyed split), especially if we exclude thinkers subsequently influenced by Heidegger himself. Similarly, Heidegger's very careful exegesis of Theatetus' "definitions" of knowledge, Socrates' refutations of them, their inner link, and the very possibility of false

opinion remains largely unmatched.

The second characteristic result of Heidegger's way of reading is his ability to clarify the issue at stake in the text even apart from or at least beyond his own explicitly guiding concerns. Heidegger tracks in an illuminating and clarifying way the *Theatetus'* discussion of the difference between the eye's sensing of, say, blue, and the soul's perceiving the whole thing, say, the beautiful blue bird that is flying above. The unity and characteristics of such wholes, their being or beauty, are beyond any sense. He shows further how the difference and connection between encountering something bodily through the senses, and seeing or making something present in advance as something, is the source of false opinion. Plato's discussion of perception and Heidegger's illumination of that discussion are worth a thousand papers by psychologists and analytic philosophers. Heidegger's great attention to what runs ahead of any instance of explicit understanding and his argument that true statements are oriented to beings as they have been revealed or brought out of hiding by our prior disclosure enable him to explain what Plato had in mind—translating but not warping the intention. Similarly, Heidegger clarifies swiftly and surely the significance of Plato's "ideas," their link to seeing, viewing, being, and light. Much current understanding of the importance of the term idea and of the association between ideas and sight originates in his teaching. A related example is his explanation in *The Essence of Human Freedom* of the true bearing of the Greek's use of property (*ousia*) for being.

THE THIRD CHARACTERISTIC, A LESS helpful one, is the way Heidegger's procedure encourages him to ignore matters that on their face are vital in the texts he examines. One would never know from *The Essence of Truth's* discussion of Plato's cave that the image belongs to a discussion of justice—justice in the city as well as in the soul—and that it and the sun belong to a group of images of which the divided line is the third. Both the bearing on justice of the question of knowledge, and the rich material for understanding the types and meaning of images themselves (and, therefore, of the ideas and their imitative relation to opinions), are passed over. (This lack remains in Heidegger's later publication on Plato, "Plato's Doctrine of Truth," which originates in these lectures.) Similarly, Heidegger discusses the return of the sun-viewer to the cave but bypasses the opportunity this return (and the *Republic* generally) affords to confront political philosophy truly as an alternative approach to some of his own major concerns. That said, his discussions of what the "good" means, of the connection and difference

between philosophy and the everyday, and of the connection between Platonic *eros* and the search or striving for being are thought-provoking in every way and a challenge to the extraordinary view of Plato presented by Leo Strauss, Jacob Klein, Seth Benardete, Eva Brann, Allan Bloom, Joseph Cropsey, Stanley Rosen, and those in their orbit.

A fourth characteristic of Heidegger's approach to other thinkers is that although from one point of view he and they illuminate the topic at hand, he rarely if ever uses his discussions to challenge his own grounds. His discussion of *eros* in Plato, for example, is used to confirm not to disturb his own notions of openness, lack, and finitude. In some cases he tries to show that a thinker's basic concepts—the difference between what beings are (tables, not chairs) and the fact that they are (this table that actually exists), the importance of causality, the uncovering of beings in terms of a highest being as well as general properties—are drawn from an implicit but ill-considered grasp of being as such and our comportment to it. In other cases he shows how impoverished a thinker's concepts and implicit understanding have become. At most, these exercises help Heidegger work out the elements of his own view of being. He already has discovered the basic ground of his view, however, and this ground ultimately is held in advance to show other thinkers' shortcomings. Heidegger believes that Plato, Aristotle, and Kant miss and yet depend on the existential dimension that Heidegger brings out. Whether they can otherwise account for it is not a question he asks seriously.

We can readily acknowledge the importance for philosophy and practice of the questions that Heidegger discusses in these volumes. We cannot know what truly is just, good, or noble unless we know the essence of truth. We cannot know how or whether we can be free unless we know what freedom is. We cannot know what freedom and truth are unless we know what it is to be. Heidegger drives these questions to the place where "everything worthy to be placed in question" about them emerges, namely, everything that belongs to their "ownmost possibilit[ies]" and is "implicated in [their] so-called presuppositions." More than this, Heidegger seeks to show the special significance of the questions of freedom and truth. Freedom is, finally, the free relationship that defines man, the relationship to being as

such. Only this relationship enables us to deal with things in the various ways that they are. Before I freely sit or stand I implicitly see the chair in its presence and significance as a possible implement within a world of implements. The implicit "pre-modeling" or blueprint comes first. Freely disclosing beings in the truth of their being, making them unhidden in their significance, is our first, continually enduring comportment to them.

Heidegger thinks that these relations are pre-philosophical: we are always freely related to being. They precede the division between theoretical contemplation and practical activity. We are not more "beingful" when we merely spectate or observe. Willful action for a concrete purpose also is different from the free relationship in which something first has the meaning and presence that then enable us to deal with it practically. Philosophy originates with "the self-discovery of the understanding of being." This self-discovery or self-understanding begins among the Greek thinkers. They do not eliminate the ordinary pre-philosophical notion of being. Rather, they implicitly retain it. This basic notion is that being is what is constantly present. Heidegger believes that because the Greeks, especially Plato and Aristotle, tacitly understand being as constant presence, they bypass the full meaning of the temporality that appears to ground presence and the present. They fail to question how it conditions our understanding of being and, consequently, how it conditions us generally. Heidegger's view of history stems from and means to work through the significance of such temporality.

THE MAIN THINGS TO BE LEARNED from these books (usefully translated by Ted Sadler) concern what it means to confront essential questions at the level of Heidegger, Kant, Plato, and Aristotle. For the student, to be serious involves just such a confrontation. One will not find political or ethical recommendations here other than injunctions or cautions to be responsible about one's own place in the nexus of being, freedom, and truth. Both "people" and individual are rooted in the true freedom in which we can decisively hold ourselves open to what, in the fullest sense, is.

Only a magician could divine from these works alone in the absence of *Being and Time*

the degree of affinity between Heidegger's thought and his support for the Nazis. We nonetheless see him characteristically scolding familiar enemies. He not only separates philosophy from science or scholarship, he sometimes denigrates each of the latter. Other professors are not just more or less wrong; Max Scheler and Nicolai Hartmann, for example, "totally misunderstand the crucial problem in the formalism of Kant's ethics." Bourgeois privacy cannot be identified with true individualism; bourgeois security must be overcome if we are to appreciate or dwell within the radicalism of philosophy. Plato's good is not an ethical concept. Marxist "ideology" finds its root in Plato. Journalism is, to say the least, unreliable.

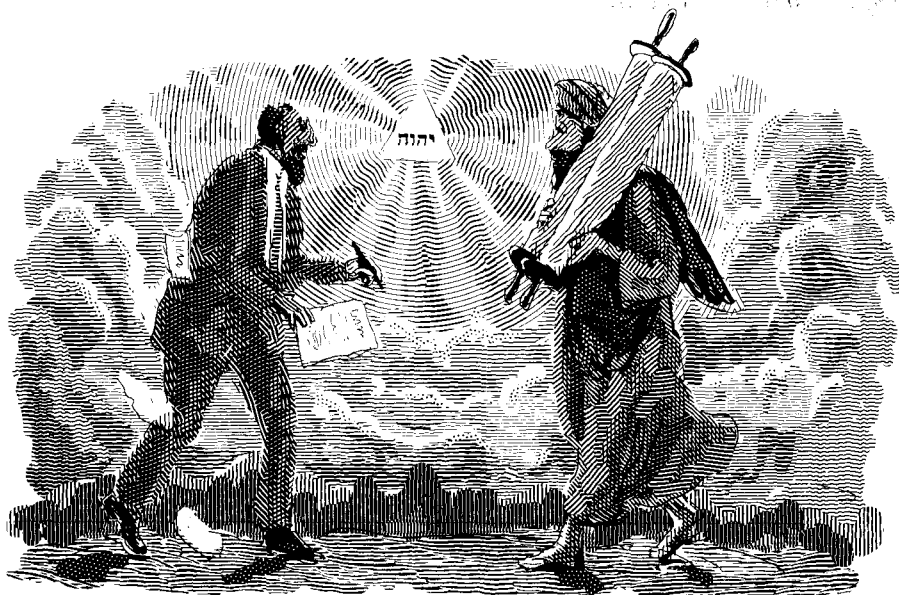
Nearly all of these views are in some way true. Many are understandable and even salutary. They stem from Heidegger's effort to put his intelligence and ours at risk, to be truly free, to overturn false security, to take philosophy so seriously that it does not subjugate itself to the expected and the polite. There is nonetheless an illiberalism in many of these views that looks more telling or even ominous when they are bracketed by *Being and Time* and the speeches of 1933 and 1934 in which Heidegger supported Hitler's government. However deep Heidegger's understanding of Kantian free will, he ignores the connection Kant himself sees between ethical freedom and political justice. Although he talks cogently (though briefly) about the meaning of the noble in Aristotle, he does not engage Plato's discussion of regimes. Opportunities and examples for resuscitating philosophical effort within or alongside virtuous or liberal political frameworks are circumvented or ignored.

One trusts that the true source of understanding does not necessitate everything that Heidegger believes it, or his access to it, requires. Although we must of course remain aware of the political conclusions Heidegger drew from his insights, we should therefore read him in a spirit that seeks to be clear about these insights themselves. We must read Heidegger with a truly open mind.

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NEW LIGHT ON THE TORAH

The Five Books of Moses: A Translation with Commentary,
by Robert Alter. W.W. Norton, 800 pages, \$39.95



FOR MANY YEARS I HAVE BEEN CITING and recommending Robert Alter's *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (1981), and more recently I have tried to apply its insights and principles in writing a commentary on the Acts of the Apostles, with its two sets of roots in the historiography both of Moses and of Thucydides. Now Professor Alter has put those principles to work in translating the entire Pentateuch (after having translated the Book of Genesis earlier) and writing a commentary on it. "His delight is in the *Torah* of the LORD," the First Psalm says in a kind of prologue not only to the Book of Psalms but to the entire Hebrew Bible, "and in His *Torah* doth he meditate day and night."

It has been an intellectual and scholarly treat, and a spiritual refreshment, to meditate along with Alter, at the rate of several chapters per day, studying his renderings alongside the parallel columns of the original Hebrew text, the Greek Septuagint, and the Latin Vulgate in volume one of my father's well-worn *Polyglotten-Bibel* (1891). Unavoidably, the first impression after such a study must be a breathless admiration for the sheer audacity of the enterprise. Every verse, sometimes every word, has been contested—among the rabbis, between the rabbis and the Church fathers, between both of these and the modern critics. There have been countless translations, with the new English versions alone jamming the bookstores, as well as countless commentaries. On the Book of Leviticus, the shortest and (to most modern

readers) the least interesting of the five books, there is, for example, a 3,000-page commentary by Jacob Milgrom, which Alter can cite approvingly on some passages but can "categorically reject" on others.

To begin with the more technical aspects of the problem, there is the Hebrew text of the Bible. It has been transmitted with the most meticulous care of any text from antiquity. The rabbis who compiled and handed on the official version of it in the so-called Masoretic Text, between the 6th and 10th centuries of the Common Era, counted the letters in each book, backwards and forwards, identifying both the number of characters and the middle one, to assure absolute fidelity of copying. Nevertheless, the Greek translation carried out by the Jews of Alexandria a century or two before the Common Era, therefore many centuries before the fixing of the Masoretic Text, repeatedly manifests a reading of the Hebrew that diverges from our received text, as do other early translations, notably the Aramaic Targums and the Syriac. Some of the Hebrew manuscripts discovered at Qumran in the "Dead Sea Scrolls," which also represent an earlier text, read the Hebrew differently at various places. Over and over, therefore, before deciding *how* to translate a passage, the translator must decide *which text* of it to translate. Already at Genesis 1:26—*And God said, "Let us make a human in our image, by our likeness, to hold sway over the fish of the sea and the fowl of the heavens and the cattle and the wild beasts and all the crawling*

things that crawl upon the earth—Alter is willing to substitute the Syriac "and the wild beasts" for the Masoretic "and all the earth." At the other end of the Torah, in Deuteronomy 32:43, he concludes that the Qumran reading "might be more authentic than the Masoretic Text." And between these two passages, he repeatedly invokes the authority of the Septuagint: sometimes he adds entire phrases and clauses from it that are missing from the Hebrew; sometimes, while conceding that "it is conceivable that the Greek translators in fact had a Hebrew text before them which read that way," he suggests that "it is also quite possible that they decided to smooth out a little stylistic wrinkle actually chosen" by the original writer; and sometimes, as at Numbers 21:30, an "attractive alternate reading" in the Septuagint is mentioned but not adopted. Several times, the similarity of two Hebrew letters which made them easy for a scribe to confuse, in this case the Dalet (d) and the Resh (r), gives him a warrant to substitute one for the other in order to make better sense of a passage.

LESS OBVIOUS A CHALLENGE TO THE translator, but at least as important because of its subtlety, is the distinctiveness of Hebrew as a language when compared with our various Indo-European languages. It does not quite share their traditional system of voice and tense, but employs "aspects" such as *qal*, *pi'el*, and *hip'il* with nuances of meaning that are often difficult to reproduce in English.

Not only is Hebrew often more rich in its vocabulary, with, for example, "four synonyms for lion...whereas English, alas, has none," but it lends itself to puns. Some of these it is possible to imitate in English (as in Genesis 2:7—*then the Lord God fashioned the human ['adam], humus ['adamah] from the soil, and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the human became a living creature*) but for others, above all in Exodus 9:3 with its "spine-tingling effect," the "fearsome pun on the divine name YHWH," there is "no obvious English equivalent." Repeatedly, Alter can have recourse to modern-day spoken Hebrew for the illumination of ancient Hebrew, reminding me that when I first studied Biblical Hebrew in 1942, six years before the founding of the State of Israel, there was no society where it was the official spoken and written tongue. Nowadays, the admonition of Leviticus 19:32, "Before a gray head you shall rise," can appear on Israeli buses to urge that passengers yield their seats to the elderly; and the Hebrew *mishlah-yad*, which appears in Deuteronomy 12:7, "has come to mean 'vocation' in modern Hebrew." A special challenge comes in "translating the names of God"; for there are scattered throughout the Torah "premonotheistic" uses of *elohim* to refer to many "gods" rather than, as it usually does, to the One True God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as well as instances of the "co-opting for monotheistic usage" of various "names once used for Canaanite deities." The unique biblical name for God was disclosed to Moses from the Burning Bush as "*Ehyeh-Asher-Ehyeh*, I-Will-Be-Who-I-Will-Be," and therefore YHWH, on which "rivers of ink have since flowed in theological reflection...and philological analysis." From this there arose "a quasi-mythological notion of God's name as a potent agency in its own right," and eventually a "general ban against pronouncing the name YHWH"—not to say translating it!

TRANSLATION, THEREFORE, MUST AT all costs avoid "explaining the Bible instead of representing it in another language." This "heresy of explanation," of which modern translators and commentators have frequently been guilty, easily "trivializes the grand solemnity and epic sweep" of Biblical narrative, and "betrays the monosyllabic plainness of the Hebrew" and other instances of "the oddness of the Hebrew" or "the ambiguity of the Hebrew" by resorting to "a single, indifferent level of diction" in English. That insistence on "representing" rather than "explaining" includes the imperative "to mirror the repetitions as much as is feasible." Where the Hebrew has "solemn, emphatic reiteration of refrainlike phrases and entire clauses," the translation should do the same. Here in the Torah, that imperative ap-

plies with special force to the snatches of poetic language that appear over and over in the course of the narrative. These often employ the "parallelistic pattern" so familiar from the Psalms, but even "Pharaoh, in his regal confidence, speaks in verse." The heights of poetry in the Torah come in the Song of the Sea at Exodus 15 and the Song of Moses at Deuteronomy 32, for which Alter's firm grasp both of the original and of the host language enables him to find "elevated and archaic" English to "represent" the Hebrew. (At the risk of seeming to imitate the bad habit of book reviewers to speak about the book they wish the author had written rather than about the book the author wrote, I do have to express my hope that Prof. Alter will go on to do a translation of the Book of Psalms. For if his rendering here of these brief pieces of poetry scattered across the Torah, and especially of the rhetorical and poetic language of Deuteronomy, is any indication, we may expect from such an English translation a delicate grasp of imagery, word order, and rhythm that does justice simultaneously to Hebrew prosody and to contemporary English usage.)

WADING INTO ALL THESE THICKETS with confidence, Robert Alter can afford to be surprisingly candid with his readers about his translation as "somewhat speculative" in some passages, or "a reasonable educated guess," or "guesses and approximations." There has to be considerable "doubt about the identification of precious stones" in Exodus 25 or of "the sundry spices" in Exodus 30, although the Hebrew word *quin-namon* in Exodus 30:23 is obvious enough. Sometimes "we can do little more than revel in the gorgeousness of the words," or find a way "for the translation to reproduce the enigma of the Hebrew" instead of "explaining" it; and sometimes "all efforts to rescue intelligible meaning from the reading that has come down to us are liable to be unavailing." The taxonomy of zoological species is especially "slippery." But an accurate identification of these is important not only for the story of the Flood, but above all for kosher law. "Already at this point in the list," Alter comments on the roster of prohibited food animals in Leviticus 11:5-6, "there is some uncertainty about the identity of the animals named in the Hebrew, and this uncertainty grows as the list moves on to birds [including the *qaath*, 'pelican' in verse 18], amphibians, reptiles, and insects." It does not help much to consult the other rosters in the Torah, because, for example in Deuteronomy 14, "once we get beyond the camel and the hare and the pig...most of the English equivalents are approximations or guesses that reflect the tradition of translations more than ancient Hebrew

zoology." All of which poses a serious enough problem for any translator of the Torah, but an infinitely more serious one for any reader of the Torah who wants to be punctiliously observant of its dietary laws and to avoid the dire consequences with which violators of those laws are threatened.

WHILE QUITE SEVERE IN HIS CRITICISM of "the modern English versions," which "have placed readers at a grotesque distance from the distinctive literary experience of the Bible in its original language" and "have shown a deaf ear to diction," Alter is respectful of "the King James Version, following the great model of Tyndale"—respectful but not deferential. And so "a help meet for him" in Genesis 2:18 becomes "a sustainer beside him"; in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17) it is "murdering," not "killing" as such, that is forbidden; and in Leviticus 25:10 "one must regretfully forgo the grandeur of the King James Version, inscribed on the Liberty Bell: 'proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto the inhabitants thereof.'" But in Exodus 8:17 its translation "swarm of flies" is as good a guess as any," and in Exodus 16:3 its "rendering of 'fleshpots'...has become proverbial in the language and deserves to be retained." Even its preposition "unto," which is otherwise archaic in contemporary English, creeps into the translation a couple of times (Genesis 26:24; Numbers 24:20). One of the literary devices to which Alter has constant recourse in "representing" the original with his translations is word order, especially crucial in a largely uninflected language like English ("man bites dog" versus "dog bites man"). Thus in Genesis 42:13, "Twelve brothers your servants are," and again 42:36, "Me you have bereaved"; in Exodus 8:15 the Egyptian soothsayers exclaim, "God's finger it is!"; and in Deuteronomy 2:2 the Lord says to Moses, "Long enough you have swung round this high country." It may be the experience of reading the entire five books straight through, which, admittedly, few will attempt; but I came away from these constant inversions somewhat jaded, and I found the later ones to be considerably less effective than the first ones had been.

As befits one who holds the title of Professor of Hebrew and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley, Robert Alter is quite willing to invoke parallels to the Torah in other literatures ancient and modern: Homer at least five times, *Oresteia*, Herodotus, *Oedipus*, *Antigone*, and Vergil; but also Shakespeare, Milton, Melville—and Goldilocks. I was delighted to see the reference to Erich Auerbach's moving chapter on the Binding of Isaac, and relieved to see only one reference to Freud's prob-

lematic imaginings about the death of Moses. There is, I think, only one explicit citation of the New Testament, though the Christian use of the benediction from Numbers 6 and the Christian festival of Pentecost are mentioned. The division of the Ten Commandments that does not count the prohibition of images in Exodus 20:4-6 as a separate commandment and that therefore prohibits "coveting" twice seems to be regarded as characteristic of all Christian churches, although in fact most Protestants, Anglicans, and Eastern Orthodox follow the same division that Judaism does.

The concentration on "representing" the text rather than "explaining" it does relieve Alter of the necessity to be trendy or politically correct in his translation and commentary. Despite superficial appearances, therefore, the story in Numbers 27 of the five daughters demanding an inheritance is "something other than a feminist argument." In translating Hebrew pronouns

Alter finds the politically correct locution "he or she" to be "awkward" (as do I), but apparently he could not altogether avoid using it. At the same time he is sensitive to the "problematic social and perhaps psychological consequences continuing through postbiblical Judaism" that have resulted from the association of menstruation with "uncleanness" in Leviticus 15. After having appropriately described Pharaoh's order to execute the firstborn sons of the Hebrews as "genocidal," he must somehow come to terms with the "bloodcurdling" and "chilling command" to extirpate Israel's enemies, including infants, for which "it is hard to find any mitigation." He can only add: "There is, thankfully, no archeological evidence that this program of annihilation was ever implemented." While making it clear that by the promises of God "Israel will have ample, and secure, borders," he does not mention the present-day arguments about the Biblical grounds for the territorial

claims of the State of Israel, except to warn against any literalism about the passages in the Torah that draw the lines of "these grandiose borders, which would make Biblical Israel seem a bit like Texas." He is especially thoughtful in describing what he aptly terms "the pervasive textualization of Jewish culture," the definition of "the text as the enduring source of authority," which he sees taking place already in the Book of Deuteronomy. He calls this "a revolutionary idea," as the subsequent history not only of Judaism but of Christianity and of Islam was to document and demonstrate.

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Song of the Sea (Exodus 15)

Then did Moses sing, and all the Israelites
with him, this song to the
Lord, and they said, saying:
"Let me sing unto the Lord for He surged, O
surged—
horse and its rider He hurled into the sea.
My strength and my power is Yah,
and He became my deliverance.
This is my God—I extol Him
God of my fathers—I exalt Him.
The Lord is a man of war,
the Lord is His name.
Pharaoh's chariots and his force
He pitched into the sea
and the pick of his captains
were drowned in the Reed Sea.
The depths did cover them over,
down they went in the deep like a stone.
Your right hand, O Lord, is mighty in power.
Your right hand, O Lord, smashes the enemy.
In Your great surging You wreck those against
You,
You send forth Your wrath, it consumes them
like straw.
And with the breath of your nostrils waters
heaped up,
streams stood up like a mound,
the depths congealed in the heart of the sea.
The enemy said:
'I'll pursue, overtake, divide up the loot,
my gullet will fill with them, I'll bare my
sword, my hand
despoil them.'
You blew with Your breath—the sea covered
them over.

They sank like lead in the mighty waters:
Who is like You among the gods, O Lord,
who is like You, mighty in holiness?
Awesome in praise, worker of wonders.
You stretched out Your hand—
earth swallowed them up.
You led forth in Your kindness
this people that You redeemed.
You guided them in Your strength to Your holy
abode.
Peoples heard, they quaked,
trembling seized Philistia's dwellers.
Then were the chieftains of Edom dismayed,
the dukes of Moab, shuddering seized them,
all the dwellers of Canaan quailed.
Terror and fear did fall upon them,
as Your arm loomed big they were like a stone.
Till Your people crossed over, O Lord,
till the people you made Yours crossed over.
You'll bring them, you'll plant them, on the mount
of Your estate,
a firm place for Your dwelling You wrought, O
Lord,
the sanctum, O Sovereign, Your hands firmly
founded.
The Lord shall be king for all time!"
For Pharaoh had come with his chariots and his
riders into the sea, and
the Lord turned the waters of the sea back upon
them, but the
Israelites went on dry land in the midst of the sea.
And Miriam the
prophetess, Aaron's sister, took the timbrel in her
hand, and all the
women went out after her with timbrels and

dances. And Miriam sung
out to them:

"Sing to the Lord for He has surged, O
surged,
Horse and its rider He hurled into the sea!"

And Moses made the Israelites journey onward
from the Sea of Reeds,
and they went out to the Wilderness of Shur,
and they went three days
in the wilderness and did not find water. And
they came to Marah and
could not drink water from Marah, for it was
bitter. Therefore is its
name called Marah. And the people murmured
against Moses, saying,
"What shall we drink?" And he cried out to the
Lord, and the Lord
showed him a tree, and he flung it into the
water, and the water turned
sweet. There did He set him a statute and law,
and there did He test
him. And He said, "If you really heed the voice
of the Lord your God,
and do what is right in His eyes, and hearken
to His commands and
keep all His statutes, all the sickness that I put
upon Egypt I will not
put upon you, for I am the Lord your healer."
And they came to Elim where there were twelve
springs of water and
seventy date palms, and they encamped there
by the water.

Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32)

"Give ear, O heavens, that I may speak, and
let the earth hear my mouth's utterances.
Let my teaching drop like rain, my saying
flow like dew,
like showers on the green and like
cloudbursts on the grass.
For the name of the Lord do I call.
Hail greatness for our God.
The Rock, His acts are perfect, for all His
ways are justice.
A steadfast God without wrong, true and
right is He.
Did He act ruinously? No, his sons' the
fault—
A perverse and twisted brood.
To the Lord will you requite thus, base and
unwise people?
Is He not your father, your shaper,
He made you and set you unshaken?
Remember the days of old, give thought to
the years of times past.
Ask your father, that he may tell you, your
elders, that they may say to you.
When Elyon gave estates to nations, when
He split up the sons of man,
He set out the boundaries of peoples, by the
number of the sundry gods.
Yes, the Lord's portion is His people Jacob
the parcel of His estate.
He found him in the wilderness land, in the
waste of the howling desert.
He encircled him, gave mind to him, watched
him like the apple of His eye.
Like an eagle who rouses his nest, over his
fledglings he hovers,
He spread His wings, He took him,
He bore him on His pinion.
The Lord alone did lead him, no alien God
by His side.
He set him down on the heights of the land,
and he ate the bounty of the field.
He suckled him honey from the crag and oil
from the flinty stone,
Cattle's curd and milk of the flocks with the
fat of lambs
and rams of Bashan and he-goats with the
fat of kernels of wheat,
and the blood of the grape you drank as
mead.
And Jeshurun fattened and kicked—you
fattened, you thickened, grew gross—
and abandoned the God who had made him
and despised the Rock of his rescue.
He provoked Him with strangers, with
abhorrences he did vex Him.
They sacrificed to the demons, the ungod,
gods they had not known,
new ones just come lately,
whom their fathers had not feared.
The Rock your bearer you neglected you
forgot the God who gave you birth.
The Lord saw and He spurned, from the

vexation of His sons and His daughters.
And He said, "Let Me hide My face from
them,
I shall see what their end will be.
For a wayward brood are they, children with
no trust in them.
They provoked Me with an ungod, they
vexed Me with their empty things.
And I, I will provoke them with an unpeople
with a base nation I will vex them.
For fire has flared in My nostrils and blazed
to Sheol down below,
eaten up earth and its yield and kindled the
mountains' foundations.
I will sweep down evils upon them, my
arrows, spending against them,
wasted with famine, withered by blight and
bitter scourge,
and the fang of beasts will I send against
them,
with the venom of creepers in the dust.
Outside will the sword bereave and
within chambers—terror.
Both youth and virgin, suckling and gray-
haired man.
I would have said, 'Let Me wipe them out, let
Me make their name cease among men.'
Had I not feared the foe's provocation, lest
their enemies dissemble, lest they say,
'Our hand was high, and not the Lord has
wrought all this.'
For a nation lost in counsel are they, there is
no understanding among them.
Were they wise they would give mind to this,
understand their latter days:
O how could one chase a thousand, or two
put ten thousand to flight, had not their
Rock handed them over, had the Lord not
given them up?
For not like our Rock is their rock, our
enemies' would-be gods.
Yes, Sodom's vine is their vine, from the
vineyards of Gomorrah.
Their grapes are grapes of poison, death-
bitter clusters they have.
Venom of vipers their wine, and pitiless
poison of asps.
Look, it is concealed with Me, sealed up in
My stores.
Mine is vengeance, requital, at the moment
their foot will slip.
For their day of disaster is close, what is
readied then swiftly comes.
Yes, the Lord champions His people, for His
servants He shows change of heart
when He sees that power is gone, no ruler or
helper remains.
He will say, 'Where are their gods, the rock
in whom they sheltered,
who ate the fat of their offerings, drank their
libation wine?
Let them arise and help you, be over you as

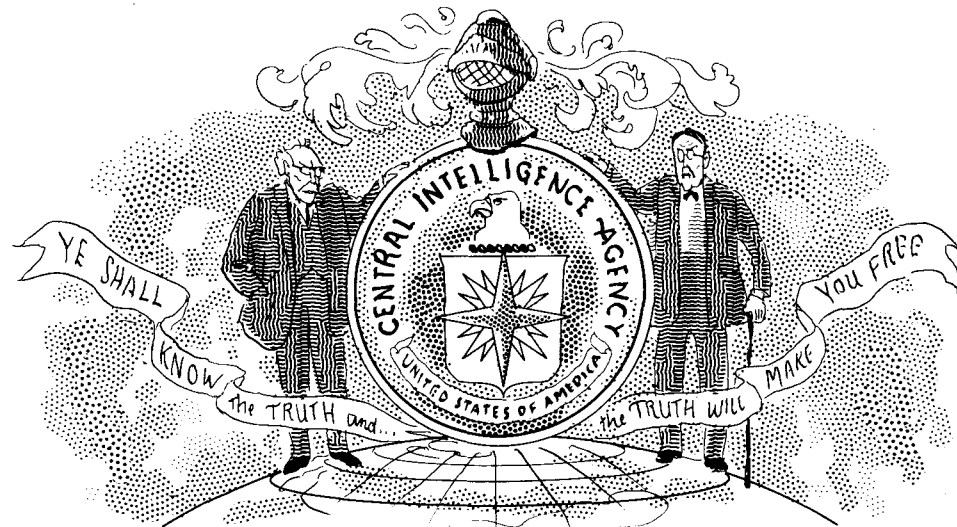
a shield!
See now that I, I am He, and no god is by
My side.
I put to death and give life, I smash and I also
heal and none rescues from My hand.
When I raise to the heavens My hand and
say, 'As I live forever.'
When I hone the flash of My sword and My
hand takes hold of justice,
I will bring back vengeance to My foes and
My enemies I will requite.
I will make My shafts drunk with blood, and
My sword will eat up flesh,
from the blood of the fallen and captive, from
the flesh of the long-haired foe.
Nations, O gladden His people, for His
servants' blood will He avenge, and
vengeance turn back on His foes, and
purge His soil, His people."

And Moses came and spoke all the words of
this song in the hearing of the people
he and Hosea son of Nun. And Moses
finished speaking
all these words to all Israel. And he said to
them, "Set your hearts upon
all these words with which I bear witness
against you today, that you
charge your sons with them to keep to do all
the words of this teaching.
For it is not an empty thing for you, but it is
your life, and through
this thing you will long endure on the soil to
which you are about to
cross the Jordan to take hold of it there."
And the Lord spoke to Moses on that very
day, saying, "Go up to this
Mount Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in
the land of Moab by Jericho,
and see the land of Canaan that I am about
to give to the Israelites as
a holding. And die on the mountain where
you are going up and be
gathered to your kin, as Aaron your brother
died in Hor the Mountain
and was gathered to his kin, because you two
betrayed Me in the midst
of the Israelites through the waters of
Meribath-Kadesh in the Wilderness
of Zin, because you did not sanctify Me in
the midst of the
Israelites. For from the far side you will see
the land, but you will not
come there, to the land that I give to the
Israelites."

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LE MORTE DE CHRISTOPHER

by Douglas A. Jeffrey



"A, my lorde Arthur, what shall becom of me, now ye go frome me and leve me here alone amonge myne enemyes?"

"Comforte thyself," seyde the kynge, "and do as well as thou mayste, for in me ys no truste for to truste in. For I muste into the vale of Avylyon to hele me of my grievous wounde."

—Thomas Malory

IN 1971, WITH THE PUBLICATION OF HIS FIRST NOVEL, *THE MIERNIK Dossier*, Charles McCarry began the story of American gentleman, scholar, poet, and spy Paul Christopher. Thirty-three years and five novels later, with the publication of *Old Boys*, that story has drawn to an apparent close. Along the way, McCarry also produced a late 17th/early 18th-century historical romance about Christopher's first New World ancestors; two nicely plotted and famously prophetic political fictions (the first, written in 1979, involved suicide bombings before their time; the second, written in 1995, concerned a constitutional crisis similar to that of the 2000 presidential election); and a fabulous (and fittingly pornographic) tale about an American politician who is reminiscent of Bill Clinton, purports to be the illegitimate son of JFK, and is a Soviet sleeper agent married to his handler. All are good reading, but the six Paul Christopher novels are McCarry's most compelling.

As recorded in *The Last Supper*, Christopher was born on Flag Day, June 14, 1924, of a Puritan Yankee father and a German mother who make a reputation in the 1930s smuggling German Jews to Denmark on their yawl *Mahican* (one of many allusions to the Leatherstocking saga in these books). On September 1, 1939, the day the *Wehrmacht* invaded Poland, Christopher and his father were granted safe passage to America by arrangement of his mother, Lori—an arrangement requiring her to remain behind as the mistress of Reinhard Heydrich, a murderous Nazi art aficionado. After arranging to have Heydrich killed, Lori mysteri-

ously disappears and becomes the lost grail for both her husband, who is murdered in the search early on, and her son, whose quest ends successfully (more or less) six decades later in *Old Boys*.

Paul Christopher's own disappearance—and reported death in China—sets the plot of *Old Boys* in motion. His cousin Horace Hubbard and five other former colleagues in the "Outfit" (as the CIA is known in McCarry's novels) come out of retirement to follow his trail. Nazis, Communists, Islamic terrorists, Russian mobsters—you name it, all the usual 20th-century suspects are somehow involved. Complicating the mission are a dozen cobalt-sheathed dirty bombs, an ancient manuscript called the "Amphora scroll" that threatens the credibility of Christianity, and the rumored return from the grave of an evil descendant of the Prophet Mohammed. James Angleton's "wilderness of mirrors" is fully operational: "Here I was in this prehistoric world," Horace writes early on from a Brazilian rainforest, "on the recommendation of a man I scarcely knew who had no reason to wish me well, in pursuit of a cousin who might be dead and a mad Arab who might not be." Under the circumstances this cohort of septuagenarian spies, acting independently of the now-bureaucratized Outfit, do themselves proud. Indeed, it is fair to say that they save Western Civilization as we know it.

But is the West as we know it worth the trouble? These "old boys" have saved it before, after all, and for what? As Horace's airplane descends into Vienna, he reflects bitterly on modern Europe:

How romantic such destinations had seemed when Charley and I were young and the Outfit was handing out scraps of the trembling Old World to kids like us and instructing us to preserve them from evil. How dreary they seemed, now that we had slain the dragon and discovered that the damsel, far from crying "My hero!" pined for the loathsome creature.



There is a wistfulness in the book about America as well. Christopher and his contemporaries, it suggests, represent a vital but dying American breed. "I could practically feel the audience responding in one weepy collective thought: They don't make men like this any longer," Hubbard observes while eulogizing his cousin. Clearly the younger generation of spies, who ridicule the "old boys" as "out of date, out of the loop, senile," and who talk like Oprah—"Thanks for sharing," one says to Hubbard, setting the latter's teeth on edge—are unworthy inheritors of their elders' mantle. In the 1950s, Christopher's oldest friend and fellow intelligence officer David Patchen had compared Washington, D.C., to "an Athens or Rome that had not yet been informed of the glories that awaited it...pregnant with the history of the future." A half century later, elegy has replaced destiny.

OLD BOYS, THEN, PARTAKES OF SOME OF the "greatest generation" romanticism that has been partly thrust upon, but also partly adopted (and certainly embraced) by the heroes who won World War II, came home to college on the G.I. Bill, and dominated American government for decades. (McCarry, who covered WWII for *Stars and Stripes* and went on to become, among other things, a deep-cover CIA agent himself, is a member of that generation in good standing.) And while it is pious and correct of younger Americans to forgive that romanticism, we shouldn't lose sight of its extraordinary character. Previous "greatest generations"—Jefferson's, say, or Lincoln's—did their good work and left rankings to others, perhaps out of a respect and awe for the past that seems to have gone missing in post-WWII America. Might it not have been more natural, after all, for Patchen—walking the streets of Washington—to have found it pregnant with the history of the past? In any case, the implicit claim that the aging and dying protagonists in *Old Boys* are irreplaceable invites us to take their serious measure.

They are patriots to be sure. Paul Christopher, in a life full of intense and mostly tragic personal relationships, is never able to express romantic love, or even fully to feel it; e.g., in *The Secret Lovers*, arguably McCarry's most artful and affecting novel, Christopher's incapacity for sexual jealousy (job-related, of course: what is there in life but deception?) drives his first wife mad. But when President Kennedy is killed—in *Tears of Autumn*, a book in which Christopher solves JFK's assassination to any sensible reader's satisfaction, albeit not to the delight of the U.S. government—he weeps and confesses (to a priest in a Congolese airport), "I love my country." Likewise in *Old Boys*, hearing of his cousin's apparent death, Horace Hubbard remarks on the nobility of dying for one's homeland. McCarry's spies contrast well in this respect with John le Carré's, far too world-weary for such sentiments.

Connected to this patriotism is a profound contempt for the 1960s counterculture. In *Second Sight*, David Patchen likens that counterculture to the German *Wandervogel*, the precursor to the Hitler Youth. He is equally scornful of the media elite that came to embody its revolutionary élan:

In late twentieth century Washington, certain politicized segments of the news media exercised many of the functions belonging to the secret police in totalitarian countries. They maintained hidden networks of informers, carried out clandestine investigations, conducted interrogations on the basis of accusations made by anonymous witnesses and agents provocateurs, and staged dramatic show trials in which the guilt of the accused was assumed and no effective defense was allowed.

McCarry, it should be mentioned, was a friend and confidante of Richard Helms, a *bête noire* of the left-leaning media and their political allies in the post-Watergate period. These are the people at whose hands, Patchen laments, "the Outfit had been robbed of its reputation" and rendered "almost incapable of operating as a secret intelligence service." They "instinctively loved their country's enemies better than they loved their country." We know them well. They are with us still.

In the post-9/11 world of *Old Boys*, hatred of the U.S. is on the rise abroad as well. Before the fall of the Soviet Union, Horace recalls, "anti-Americanism had usually been skin deep; everyone but the stomach-acid left had liked us well enough in private, and even some of them had a little bit of kindness for us. Nowadays it was a pathology, like anti-Semitism." The diagnosis rings true. But what do the "old boys" have to pass on, even as they pass from the scene, to counter this pathology? What underlies their refreshing patriotism? Surprisingly, not much.

"All my life I've believed that the truth is worth knowing, even if it leads to nothing," Christopher says in *Tears of Autumn*. "It usually leads to nothing. But what else is there?" (Ironically, in the circumstances in which he is speaking, it leads to the violent death of his best-beloved and ten years for him in a Chinese prison camp.) But again: "They [Christopher and Patchen] knew, because they had

spent their lives doing it, that it was possible to break open the human experience and find the dry truth hidden at its center.... Their work had taught them that the truth, once discovered, was of little use." "Dry" is the operative word: what the "old boys" call truth is not the stuff that sets men free.

THE CHRISTOPHER SAGA PUTS LITTLE STOCK IN FAITH OR reason. The former is represented almost solely by fanatical Muslims, and Christianity is treated as an object of faux-intellectual hostility. The "Amphora scroll" in *Old Boys* is a "fifth gospel" portraying Christianity as an unintended consequence of an ill-conceived Roman intelligence operation gone bad. Reflecting on the scroll, Horace lumps St. Paul with the Prophet Mohammed and Karl Marx as "bent geniuses" of the kind who appear once a millennium or so and wreak havoc with mankind. This subsidiary plot line in *Old Boys* might be dismissed as simply quirky, were it not that it reinforces a persistent theme in these novels.

**Charles McCarry's novels
discussed in this essay:**

The Miernek Dossier.
Overlook Press,
276 pages, 1971

The Tears of Autumn.
Overlook Press,
276 pages, 1974

The Secret Lovers.
Dutton, 308 pages, 1977

The Last Supper.
Dutton, 389 pages, 1983

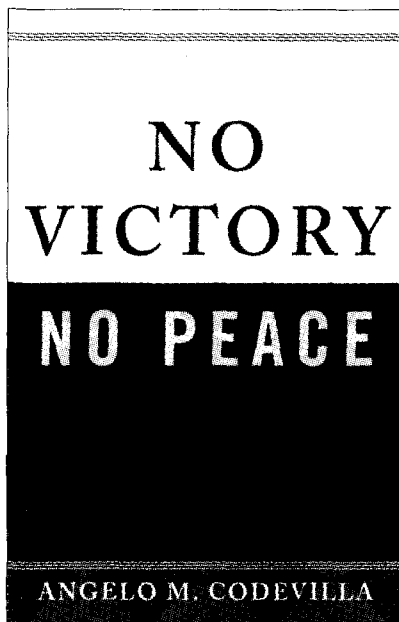
Second Sight.
Dutton, 480 pages, 1991

Old Boys.
Overlook Press,
512 pages, 2004

NO VICTORY, NO PEACE

By Angelo M. Codevilla

June 2005, 200 pages
ISBN 0-7425-5003-6 \$22.95 paper
ISBN 0-7425-5002-8 \$55.00 cloth



What does this so-called Global War on Terrorism really mean to the political elite in the United States? Can the U.S. ever emerge victorious in this unique struggle? Who and what is the enemy and what are they doing that stands in the way of victory in the global war? Has the Bush administration demonstrated a grasp of the principles of warfare? The Bush Administration has not achieved peace because it has not sought victory. This book shows that the biggest mistake in any war is to misidentify which persons are the obstacles to the peace one seeks. Bringing terrorists to "justice" has no more logical connection with defeating the causes for which they fight than does keeping certain weapons out of the hands of certain states, or even making sure that free elections with female suffrage become universal. *No Victory, No Peace* applies the classical concepts of warfare to America's current struggles, and shows the (hard) way to win peace.

No Victory, No Peace is a collection of essays each written at crucial points in the war on terror and the Iraq war. Meant to be read years after the events they describe, they hold up this war's conduct to timeless standards.

ANGELO M. CODEVILLA is a senior fellow at Claremont Institute and a professor of international relations at Boston University. He was a former Foreign Service officer, U.S. Senate committee staffer, member of the Reagan transition team, and senior research fellow at Hoover. His books include *The Character of Nations: How Politics Makes and Breaks Prosperity, Family, and Civility* (1997) and *War: Ends and Means* (1990).

Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

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In *Second Sight*, the revered director of the Outfit (referred to as "the O.G.," for "old gentleman") recalls "the truest sentence Hubbard [Paul Christopher's father] ever wrote"—namely, that "two thousand years of Christian teaching produced the SS." (Echoes of Graham Greene, another novelist with whom McCarry is often compared. Greene's leading man in *The Quiet American* says of a colleague: "he was a Christian—one of those who had learned from Nero how to make human bodies into candles.") The O.G. concludes that "any Christian nation was capable of slaughtering the Jews; believe me, there would have been no shortage of volunteers to run the death camps in Russia or France or England or even in the good old U.S.A."

Paul Christopher himself, after parroting his father's charge against Christianity in *Tears of Autumn*, condemns all "intellectual systems" equally—his beloved America's included: "The system of the Ghanaian tribe is as sensible as Christianity or your own family's sense of aristocracy, or *what the Americans call the dignity of the individual*" (*italics added*). The Vietnamese girl to whom he is speaking concludes that Christopher must then believe in nothing, to which he responds by embracing the idea of "consequences." Just as the consequence of Christianity's intellectual system was the SS, he explains—sounding every bit like an avatar rather than critic of '60s pop-nihilism—the result of America's was "the Hiroshima bomb." The only purpose of such systems is "to justify the exchange of death."

SUBSEQUENT TO HIS DEEP-COVER WORK in the CIA (and a stint as a speechwriter in the Eisenhower Administration), Charles McCarry was a longtime editor-at-large for *National Geographic*, and as the author's notes concluding his novels make clear, he takes pride in the verisimilitude of his depictions of remote landscapes, lost tribes, ancient cultures, even the migratory habits of birds (those of the Houbara Bustard are critical to the plot of *Old Boys*). One presumes he is as careful in delineating the minds of the Americans he knows best—his generation's best and brightest, who flocked from America's elite universities in the 1940s and early '50s with an unbridled enthusiasm for "public service." Christopher, Patchen, and Hubbard are Yale men—not surprisingly, given Yale's long-

time special relationship with American intelligence. (Robin Winks, in *Cloak and Gown: Scholars in the Secret War, 1939-1961*, traces this relationship from Nathan Hale to the modern era, when, for example, 42 members of Yale's class of 1943 enrolled in the OSS, and many more joined other branches of intelligence.) In this light, McCarry's novels could be read to support William F. Buckley's thesis in *God and Man at Yale*—that by 1950 elite higher education was already operating to strip young Americans of any inherited "illusions" that God is in his heaven or that freedom (based on the "dignity of the individual") is objectively superior to any other ground of political life. (McCarry said in a recent interview that in his decade in intelligence work he never met a Republican, not one.)

TO REPEAT, THE "OLD BOYS" ARE PATRIOTS. But their allegiance is to what, exactly? Not to the Constitution: In McCarry's two fine political books, *The Better Angels* and *Shelley's Heart*, Horace Hubbard, the narrator and hero of *Old Boys*, is complicit in a plot (by a secret cabal of Yale alumni, of course!) to subvert a presidential election. Nor, clearly, to the idea of American exceptionalism; nor to Christendom as represented by what Michael Moore, after the 2004 election, bitterly dubbed "Jesusland." Such attachments would have required the "old boys" to look backward; but their thinking seems formed by the Progressive view that (in Woodrow Wilson's words) "the future, not the past" is "the more glorious time in comparison with which the present is nothing." They sought to make, not preserve a world. And when in the end they find it pretty much the same, they are disillusioned; and the future looks bleaker than it is.

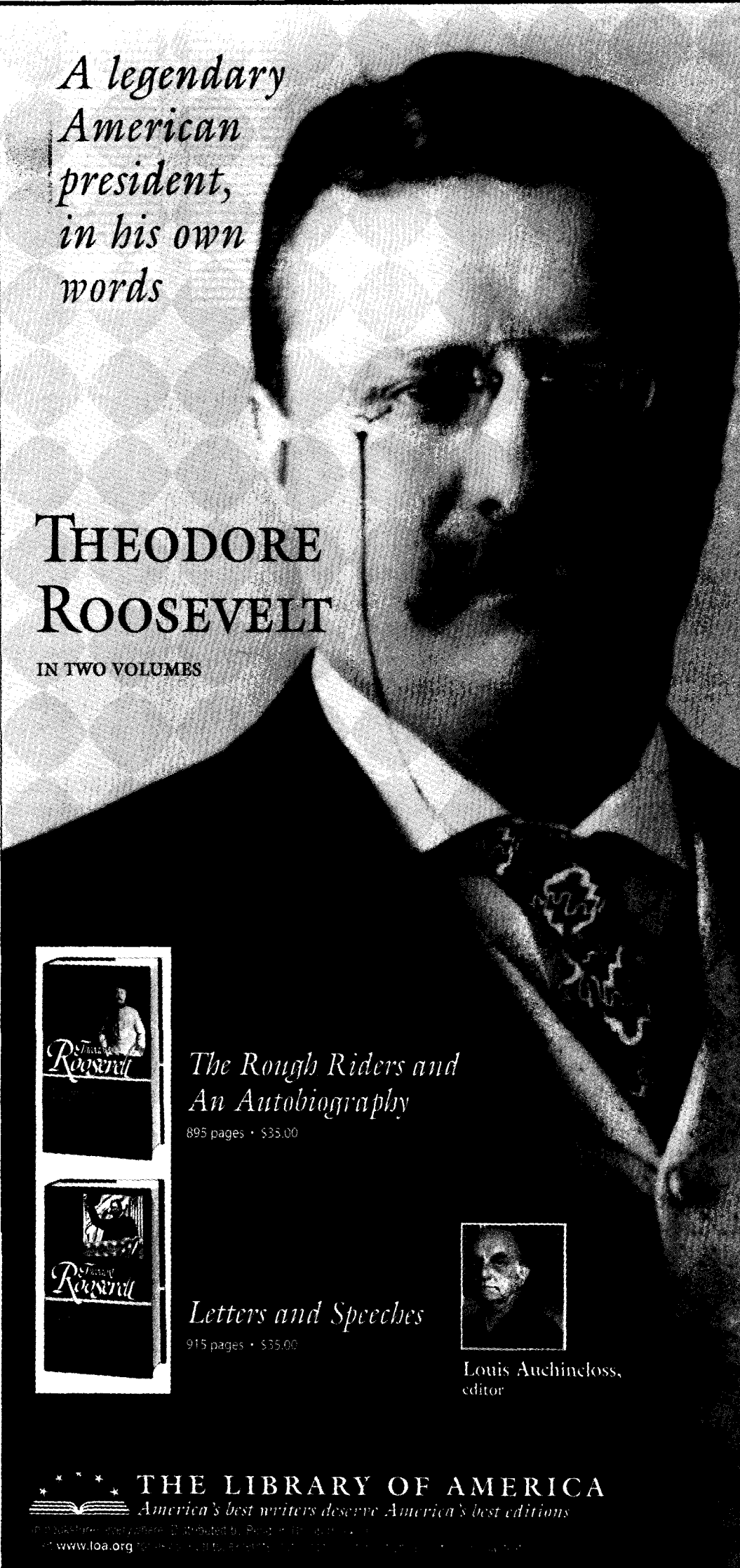
Old Boys concludes with Horace and his ancient colleagues toasting Paul Christopher over his empty grave. Known only to them, he has retreated to a secret and quiet place with his long lost mother. His retirement is deserved, even as he and his friends deserve honor for their achievements and sacrifices in the century's great conflicts. But there's neither reason nor time to mourn for our country at their passing.

Douglas A. Jeffrey is vice president for external affairs at Hillsdale College and a senior fellow of the Claremont Institute.

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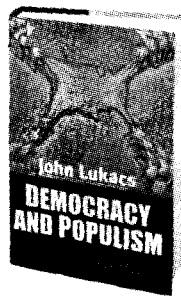
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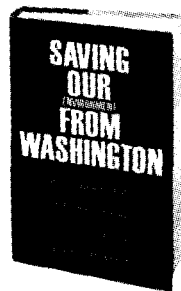
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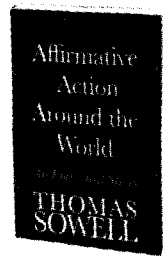
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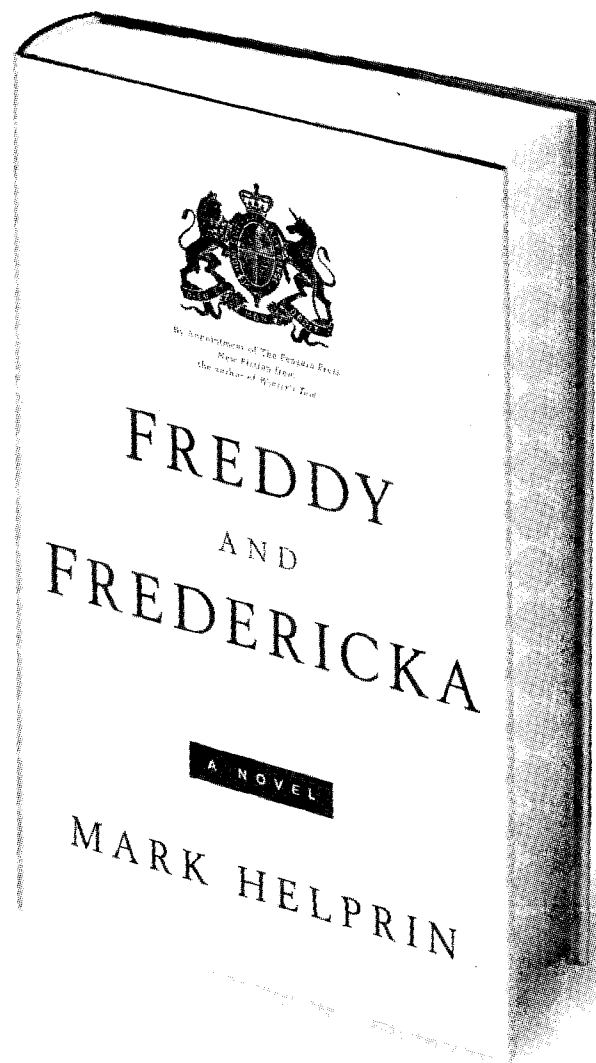
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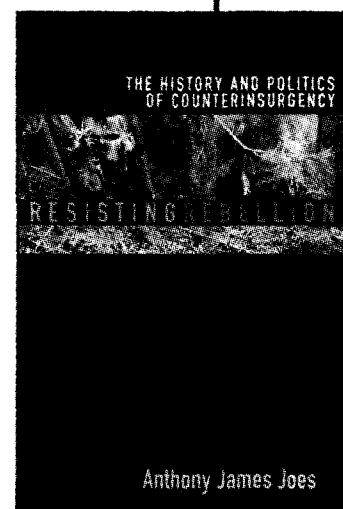
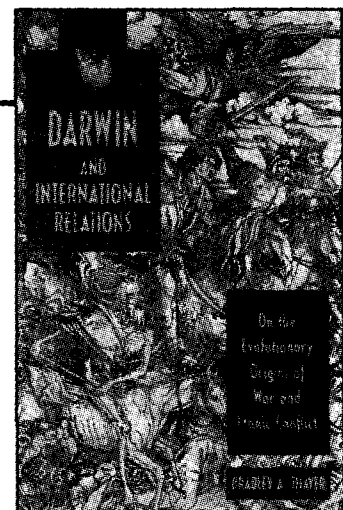
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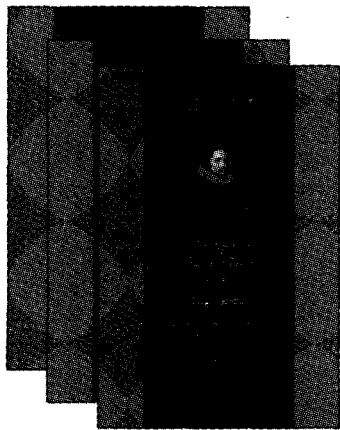
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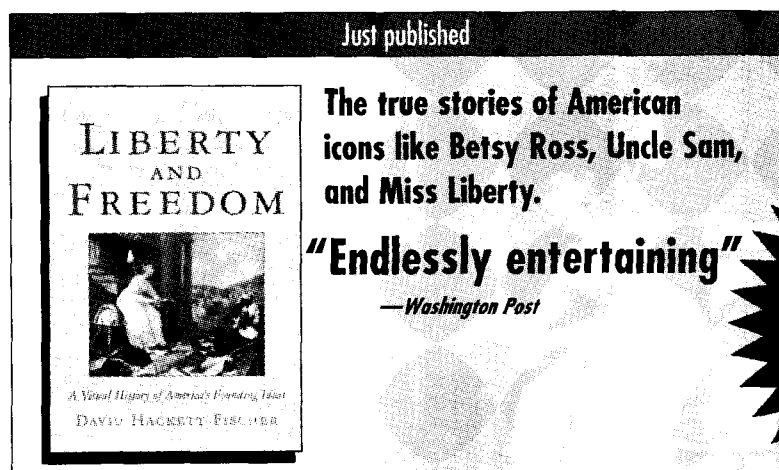
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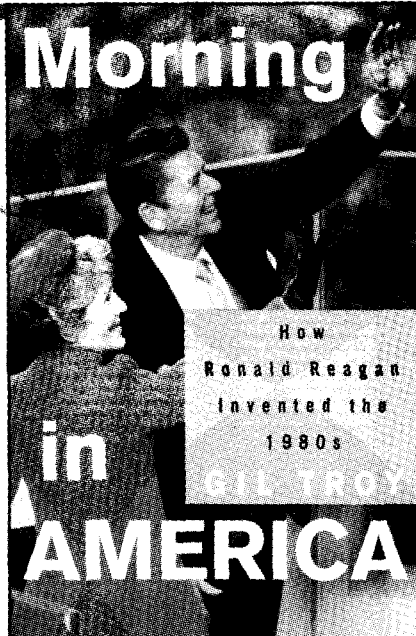
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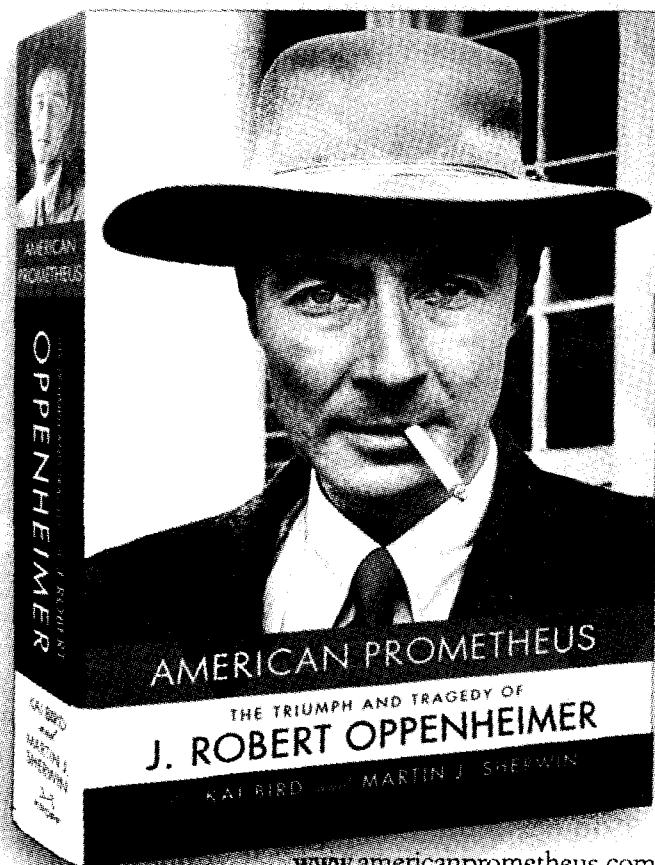
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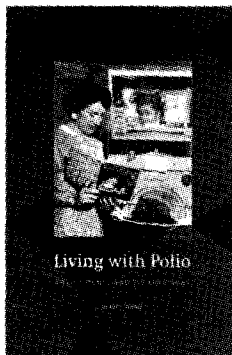


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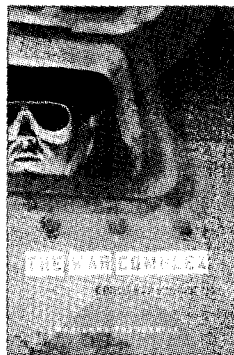
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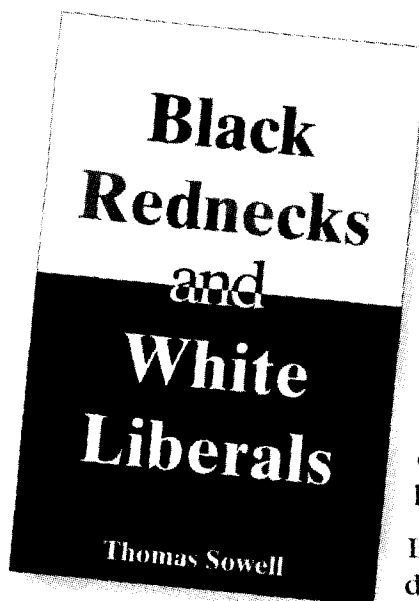
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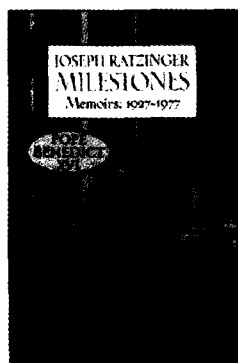
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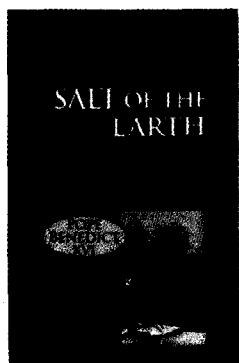
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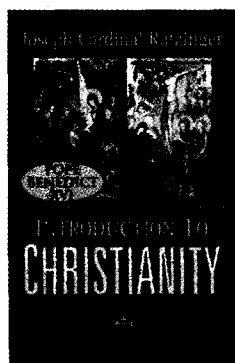
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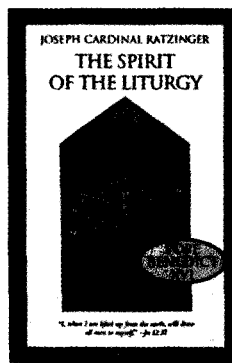
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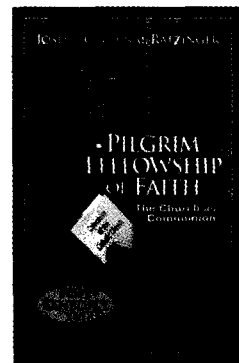
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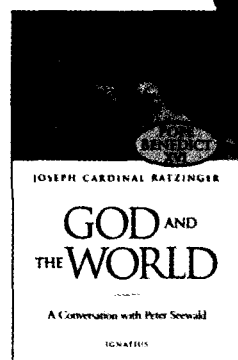


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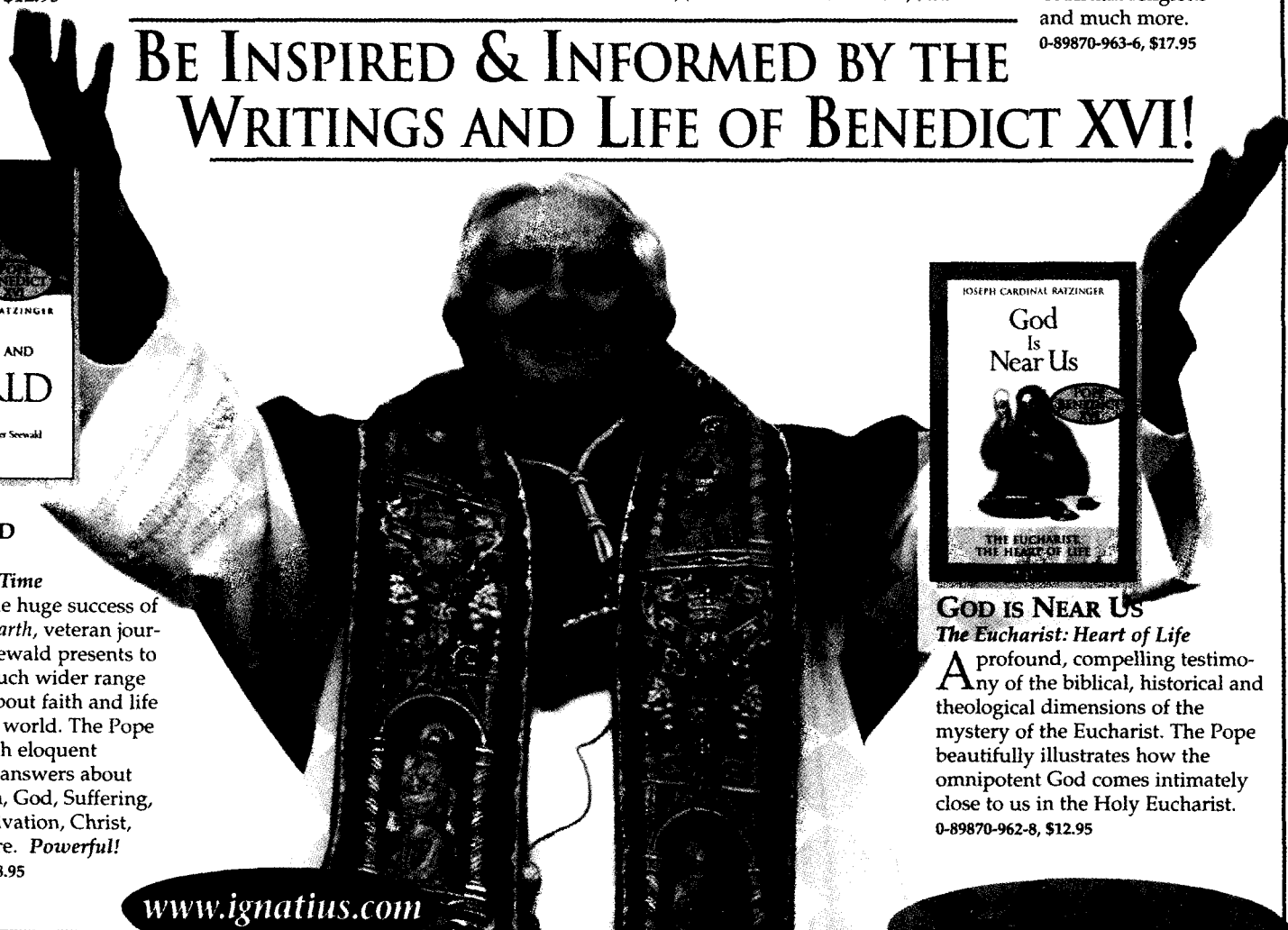
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The signs of erosion on our campuses are undeniable, whether we examine declining test scores, spiraling costs, or college graduates' ignorance of basic facts and ideas. In response, our academic leadership is not talking about a more competitive curriculum, higher standards of academic accomplishment, or the critical need freely to debate important issues. Instead, it remains obsessed with a racial, ideological, and sexual spoils system called "diversity." Even as the airline industry was deregulated in the 1970s, and Wall Street now has come under long-overdue scrutiny, it is time for Americans, if we are to ensure our privileged future, to reexamine our era's peculiar institution, the politicized university.

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